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MRS. ALEXANDER.

IN ONE VOLUME.

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THROUGH FIRE TO FORTUNE

BY

MRS. ALEXANDER, [pseud.]
AUTHOR OF
"THE COST OF HER PRIDE," "A WINNING HAZARD,"
"BROWN, V.C.," ETC.

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THROUGH FIRE TO FORTUNE.

CHAPTER I.

"Now mind you do not let the fire go out, and lay supper for nine o'clock. I'll not be much after that. Be sure you finish your packing, Susy," was the parting injunction of Mrs. Mayfield, as she closed the area door of her neat little semi-detached house in Park Road, Kilburn. She was a plump, keen-eyed matron, who ruled the fortunes of a rather lazy husband, many sons, and two daughters, Susan being one of the latter.

"Let us see to the fire at once," she said to a young friend who was spending the Sunday afternoon with her, "then we'll go upstairs and finish up my big box, for that's to go off to-morrow early, as it's to go with the heavy luggage. I am to join the family in the Isle of Wight to-morrow afternoon." Having replenished the fire, Susan led the way to the second storey, where a fair-sized, comfortable bedroom was in the littered con-

dition indicative of packing. "It is lucky for me the rooms are all empty," continued Susan, for her friend listened in silence. "It is so nice to have this big room all to myself."

"You are very lucky altogether, Susan. You have a kind, good mother to love you, and——"

"Yes, she is good and wise; but she doesn't care half as much for me as for Alice, especially since she got engaged to Joe Pearson, and is to have a house of her own."

Susan Mayfield was somewhat short and thick in figure, dark-haired and rosy, with a broad, pleasant face, and laughing eyes of no particular colour.

Her friend was most dissimilar. Below middle height, exceedingly slight, with graceful shoulders and rounded waist, something of quiet harmony in her movements suggested symmetry of form. Her red-brown hair was braided as closely as its abundance would permit, and rolled in a tight but large knot at the back. Her brow was wide, her eyes large and darkly grey, though some people thought them blue and others black. She was somewhat colourless, but her mouth, though wide, was red lipped, and had a dimple beside it when she smiled and showed her white teeth. Her expression was grave, or indeed sad, and her voice low, even sweet, though marred now and then by the vile London accent she had heard all her life. She was speaking.

"Still, Susy, you have had a good home, and now you are lucky in getting such an engagement. To cross

the wide ocean and see the world! I do envy you! Not that I would take your luck from you, dear, but I wish *I* could get such a place."

"And I'm to be called a nursery governess, which makes a lady of me at once—hand me the dress and cloak and parasol that are on the bed; thank-you, dear —but I'm sure I do not know what I could *teach!* I never cared for books, like you. There's a little box on the dressing-table, give it to me"—Susan was on her knees—"*now* I don't think I could get in a pair of gloves more. I'll lock it, and we'll go down and have a real good talk. Come along, Cara."

In the tiny parlour on the basement, looking upon a rather smoke-dried garden, the two girls settled themselves for the last gossip they were to have for years. Susan took a rocking-chair, which she moved to and fro, while her friend selected a low basket-work seat near the window, which was open, for the August evening was warm.

"You just go to Mrs. Peters's registry-office in Pimlico. I'll give you the address. I got my chance there. Mrs. Lorrimer is such a nice lady. We sail for Sydney next Friday. At first I felt half afraid to go so far, but I have got quite accustomed to the idea. You are going to leave Madame Dulàc, eh?"

"Yes. I ought to have left yesterday, but she asked me to stay till to-morrow as there is a strange girl there; but she said I might come out this evening."

"Does she make a pretty good thing of her clear-starching and cleaning?"

"Well, I fancy she does; she gets more and more work. She does a good bit of millinery for her old customers. But success does not make her better tempered. She is so severe. She locks up the girls' bedrooms at half-past nine at night for fear they should slip out."

"Isn't she vexed at your leaving?"

"Yes, awfully; but I do want to find a lady's-maid's place. I *should* like to wait on a nice, kind, elegant lady, and take care of her beautiful clothes."

"Sometimes they are terribly ill-tempered."

"Anything is better than going back to my stepmother," continued Cara, as if she had not heard the other.

"Has she been bad lately?" asked Susan.

"Worse than ever. It makes me sick to look at her. She is rarely quite sober. And to think that my father, a gentleman, married such a woman. She used not to be nearly so bad. I know I hated her as a child, because, even then, I felt such a person ought not to have been put over me. But, looking back, I see she was not bad or unkind to me; only when I remember my own mother——"

Her voice broke. She leant her brow on her hand and was silent for a minute.

"It has been hard lines for you," exclaimed Susan sympathetically.

"Did I ever show you my mother's picture?" asked her companion, raising her head.

"No."

"I have it here," feeling in an inner pocket, and drawing out a small morocco case which enclosed two miniatures: one of a fair girl with large, dark eyes, a face more charming than beautiful; the other, a good-looking man in cavalry uniform.

Susan examined them with eager interest.

"Dear, dear!" she cried. "Ain't she sweet! She might be a princess as far as looks go. And was that your father? Why, he has soldier's clothes!"

"He was a captain in the army."

"Good Lord, what a shame!" ejaculated Susan.

"That he should be a captain?" said Cara, smiling.

"Good Lord, no! But that you and me should have sat on the same bench at the same school!"

"Very lucky for me you *did*, Susy. You have been a dear friend to me." She began to fold up her treasures in an old silk pocket-handkerchief. "You see," she went on, "the new Belgian girl sleeps in my room, and the housekeeper fancies she is not too honest. She may be wrong, but I could not risk these, nor my little bit of money, so I brought both with me. Here are all my savings," and she drew forth a netted purse from the same receptacle and counted over its contents. "Three sovs and a half in gold, and five and threepence in silver. Madame owes me another sovereign, and oh! I've sixpence in my pocket for 'buses."

"Well, dear, the sooner you find a situation the better. When do you leave Madame Dulac's?"

"Tuesday morning, if I go. She may ask me to stay.

Then I will not say no; she was very civil to let me out so early to-day."

"And *you* are a dear to give it all to me, for I know what a good girl you are, and so fond of going to church."

"I do not know if that is any sign of goodness, Susy. I go because I love the music and the solemn silence, and—oh! because it takes me out of my mean, sordid life for a few hours. But I think I wish more to lead a lady's life than to go to Heaven."

"What has become of your stepmother's sons?"

"Oh, Fred is now—let me see—fourteen, I think. He is errand-boy at a grocer's, and so rough and rude. Then the eldest, Jack"—she shuddered slightly—"he has gone to sea, thank God! I would not have gone for a day to the house, or rather, rooms, had he not gone. He was appallingly fond of me. I am almost ashamed to feel so sick when I think of him. We are all fellow-creatures."

"Yes, with a difference," responded Susan. "Well, Cara, don't you lose any time in trying to find a better situation. Try Mrs. Peters's office in Belgrave Road. Get there early. I think you are the sort of girl ladies would take a fancy to. It's a pity you always wear black," taking a handful of the soft grenadine of which her friend's dress was made, "but you always look neat."

Here the conversation diverged to the interesting topic of dress, with episodes respecting Australia, for which colony Susan was bound, and Cara's interest in her

friend's fortunes made her quite oblivious of her own woes.

It seemed as if supper-time came very quickly, but all was ready when father and mother and some of the boys came in. The meal was prolonged by much animated talk respecting the fine prospects which were opening before Susy. The brothers were warmly sympathetic, but no one seemed to feel the pang of parting much.

"It is getting late," said Cara at length. "I must say good-bye, Susan."

"Well, yes; I know how severe madame is." The girls retired together when Cara went to put on her hat and rain-cloak, for the night looked threatening, and they enjoyed a few last words. Cara's eyes were full of tears.

"I do hope you'll get in in time, Cara."

"Oh, I am sure I shall. I had leave to stay later than usual."

"I would come with you, only I have some things to do still."

"Don't think of it, Susy dear!" A hearty kiss or two, and they parted.

But Cara was not in luck. One after another the omnibuses, heavily laden, passed her. She grew anxious. Then, when she found a seat, the vehicle turned up St. John's Wood Road—the street being "up" lower down—and when she asked to be put down as near as possible to Lowther Street she lost her way in a labyrinth of narrow, dark, unpleasant streets quite unknown to her. At

last a poor, weary-looking woman guided her near to the place she wanted—a side-street opening into Edgware Road, at the corner of which Madame Dulac's house was situated. Everything was dark and still. She was late after all! As Cara went up the steps and knocked she perceived a strong odour of burning, mixed with something acrid and metallic. She wondered vaguely what would cause it as she waited for admittance.

On week-days the entrance-door stood open — to admit on business to the front parlour, which served as an office. Cara wondered there was no light; she knew Madame Dulac was not expected till after twelve, as she had gone some way into the country.

There was no answer to her repeated applications, and at last she turned away with an increasing sense of uneasiness, crossing the road to have a better view of the upper windows. It was a clear though moonless night, and she could make out the front of the house. All was dark and silent. Once she thought she saw a white or light-coloured figure pass the window against a dark background; and while she gazed the smell of burning grew stronger, and she perceived something like smoke escaping round the closed door and the frame of the lower window. Even while she hesitated as to whether her eyes deceived her, a little flickering point of flame came through a corner of the window. It was followed by a slight sound of cracking glass, followed again by a large puff of smoke, and more pointed, fiendish-looking flames.

"Good Heavens! the house is on fire! Are they all asleep? How is it they do not try to escape? What shall I do?" she exclaimed aloud.

Instinct answered the query. She ran swiftly into the main-street, looking eagerly for a policeman. The place seemed deserted, but lower down at the opposite side, she perceived a figure approaching whose aspect and gait suggested police, so crying: "Police! Fire!" she ran forward to meet him.

"Where? where?" he called, quickening his pace.

"At the corner of Albert Street! Where is the Fire Brigade station?"

"By Paddington Green—close by. I'll run and give the alarm. They'll be up in a few minutes," and he started at a speed that seemed impossible for a policeman.

A few minutes! They might all be consumed before help could come. The young woman she had lived and worked with, the friendly housekeeper, possibly Madame Dulac! How dreadful it was, and how powerless she was! But her cry of "Fire!" had broken the spell of silence and loneliness. Windows were thrown open, heads thrust out, and voices repeated the policeman's question, Where? Young men, and boys, and unkempt girls came hurrying from shabby side-streets, and soon Cara found herself one of almost a crowd pushing towards a corner where a red glare was already illuminating the night. Still there was no sound save a crackling and hissing of the flames, which had burst out with un-

accountable vehemence, as if the conflagration had begun from within and burnt outwards.

Cara felt sick with horror. No sign of life was visible; no eager figures appeared at the windows, now shattered by the fierce heat, and implored aid.

"There ain't no one in the place."

"All gone out for the day and night."

"Better luck for them."

"Some poor soul of a caretaker left sleeping downstairs. It was all up with her long ago!"

Such were the comments that Cara heard passing round her.

"I know there were several people in the house," she said to a policeman, for several had now appeared. "Can nothing be done?"

"I'm afraid not. The poor things must have been smothered with all this smelly smoke before the fire touched them."

Now the fire-engine was got to work, and the hissing of the water was added to the other noises.

How long she stood on a doorstep breathlessly watching the conflict between fire and water Cara could not tell, but at last the leaping flames began to diminish, and bit by bit the ruins of what was a house little more than an hour ago grew dull, then black, with little outbreaks of flame here and there. The helmeted firemen trampled over the hot embers through the entrance, but ventured no further, for all agreed that nothing lived within. They continued their exertions only to ensure

the safety of the neighbouring houses. The onlookers began to disperse.

All hope of finding a survivor over, a sudden thought flashed across Cara's brain. To escape her stepmother had been her most passionate desire. How often had that deplorable female shamed her by visits to her employer's place of business when scarcely able to stand! How was she to disentangle herself from such a millstone? Was not this catastrophe an opportunity? At the idea she almost unconsciously began to move with the throng, and soon found herself in Edgware Road. She walked on towards Hyde Park, thinking out the plan suggested by her strong desire for freedom from the horrible connection which dragged her down. She wanted two full years of twenty-one. Till then her abhorred stepmother had a certain hold upon her—her unfortunate, muddled father having been persuaded to appoint Mrs. Leigh his daughter's guardian. Now everyone would believe she was dead, consumed in the fire she had just witnessed. True, she would reduce herself to the most appalling state of isolation—would she have the courage to brave this? In any case, now her friend Susan Mayfield was gone, or going, her lot would be lonely enough. Yet she might make new friends. She would work faithfully to earn her living, and perhaps God would help her. It was curious that she had been prompted to take her treasured miniatures, her little all of cash, with her that evening. Was that a silent indication of the line she ought to take?

CHAPTER II.

FEELING profoundly the difficulties and dangers of the death and resurrection to which she was disposed to commit herself, Cara Leigh knew she should not be able to resist the impulse which impelled her to dare them, and instinctively imagination began to devise the methods she should adopt to cut off all connection with the past. For the moment she had money, but in the fire her entire wardrobe had been consumed. How hard she had worked to collect a neat and sufficient supply of clothing! It would be long before she could replace it. Then how should she find employment without a reference, without a recommendation?

Still the idea haunted her. Meantime, where should she find shelter? It must be towards morning. It seemed many hours since she had first noticed that thick, evil-smelling smoke forcing its way through the chinks and crannies of the door. How she hoped those poor victims had been stifled before they suffered! But the question of shelter drove them from her mind.

Then she remembered that a little lower down the street was a deep doorway, or porch, used by a photographer who owned the house to display several large stands full of specimen portraits. There she might hide

till daylight. Then, even then, it would not be too late to go to her stepmother's abode, which was far away in Islington, and—— But no! Freed from that vampire of a woman, she found the idea of beginning life afresh had taken possession of her, and she pressed on. Her observation had been correct. The photographer's porch afforded ample shelter. Moreover, the bench or ledge on which his cases rested during the day afforded her a seat. Here, crouched in a corner, she steadily awaited the light. In earnest thought, scanning the future and its possibilities, time slipped by. No doubt she dozed from time to time, for the first pale glimmer of day came sooner than she expected; then the discordant whistle from the canal wharf shrilled out, calling the workmen to their daily toil, and the sounds of hastening feet told Cara that day had begun. Then the tolling of a bell struck her ear, and reminded her that a very Ritualistic church in a shabby street near at hand had early service at half-past six. She rose from her uncomfortable seat, and ventured timidly out of shelter. The first stragglers of toil's army had gone to their work, and no one was stirring. Cara darted forth and walked a few paces rapidly, relieved that no one had seen her creep forth from her hiding-place, and a little further she turned into the narrow street whence the bell sounded. She was soon kneeling among the scanty worshippers who attended at that early hour.

Cara's religion was very dim and vague, yet she always prayed heartily. There was no formality in her

faith, and it comforted and strengthened her to find that this devotional interlude in no way inclined her to turn aside from her intention of seeking a new life.

The rest of that morning always seemed like an amazing dream to her in after days. Nothing occurred to hinder her, and her own strength astonished her. Walking to Victoria she learnt from a porter who, with others, was sweeping the platform, that the waiting-rooms would not be open for more than an hour. Cara took a return ticket to Clapham by the next train rather than linger about the station.

Moreover, it would give her the air of being a real traveller. Then she could get some breakfast, the need of which she began to feel. This plan she carried out, and was almost ready to drop when she regained Victoria.

Here she enjoyed the infinite refreshment of a cup of tea and food; then, having caught a glimpse in a mirror of the battered, smoked condition of what had been yesterday her simple, pretty hat, she decided that no one would accept the services of a girl in such a disreputable headgear, and determined to spend some of her slender store in buying another.

Going into the waiting-room she asked the person in charge, who was herself busy at needle-work, if she might bring in a hat and trim it, as she had come up to town to look for employment, and what she was wearing was terribly old and shabby.

"Yes, sure!" was the hearty response. "What you've on would never do."

Having supplied herself with a grey straw hat and two or three yards of black ribbon, Cara returned, and having made as complete a toilet as circumstances permitted, she sat down and, with deft fingers, soon trimmed an extremely modest, serviceable hat, of which the friendly superintendent of the ladies' waiting-room highly approved.

It was not yet ten o'clock, and too early to present herself at the registry-office, so she took up an old newspaper, and applied herself to that refuge for the destitute, the advertisement sheet, or sheets, and bewildered herself among the infinite variety of supply and demand recorded therein. At last the hands of the clock pointed to 10.45, and Cara thought she might venture to visit Mrs. Peters's registry-office.

She paid her fee and entered her name; then, for what seemed endless hours, she was interviewed by matrons young and old, severe, playful, serious, exacting, indulgent, who required lady's-maids, cooks, companions, useful lady-helps, secretaries, nurses, *masseuses*, readers, every conceivable assistant, including attendants on the mentally afflicted. By all she was rejected when they found she could give no reference, and could offer no recommendation. Cara's heart sank below zero as she sat in stony silence, contemplating the hopelessness of her attempt to make a fresh start under so great a disadvantage. It was midday, and a pause in the tide of seekers ensued. Ladies were lunching, and many of the young women in waiting went away to get refreshment.

The clerk locked up his desk previous to leaving the office. His eye fell upon Cara as he was going.

"Not suited?" he said. "Well, I should say you were a likely one."

"I am afraid I am not," she returned dejectedly.

"Wait a bit," he exclaimed quickly.

At that moment a lady came into the office who seemed to Cara different in some indescribable way from those she had seen before. She was tall, and carried herself with an air of distinction. She was well but plainly dressed. Her hair was grey, and worn *à l'Impératrice.* Her hard eyes were very bright and keen, and she had a delicate colour which struck Cara as particularly pleasing; but as she walked towards the sort of counter which occupied one side of the office Cara saw that she was lame, as if one leg was shorter than the other. Yet she was not ungraceful. Before she crossed the room she paused and looked piercingly round at the few applicants who remained, then she said, very audibly, though her voice was by no means loud: "Are these all you have?" with a wave of her hand, as if the persons she indicated were cattle or inanimate commodities.

"Yes, madam, at present," replied the clerk obsequiously.

"You are all extremely tiresome!" she exclaimed. "I thought I was sure to be suited *here,* and I don't think you are a bit better than any other office. Is the

inner room unoccupied? Yes? very well; come, I want to speak to you."

She passed through a door at the further end of the counter, followed by the clerk, who soon returned and went directly to Cara.

"She has asked to see you first, but it's not much of a chance. She wants everything for next to nothing. She was here the livelong day yesterday, and didn't find a creature to suit her; everyone that spoke to her came away in a fury. There, go; don't keep her waiting."

In some trepidation Cara entered a room set apart for private interviews, and there found this formidable personage seated in an armchair beside a large table, with writing materials at her elbow.

Cara made a slight respectful curtsey, and stood at a little distance.

"Come nearer"—imperiously—"I want to see you. Now, what can you do?"

Cara felt puzzled, and tried to remember all in a minute what was the work of a lady's-maid.

"I can do needlework, and wash lace pretty well, and I have done millinery——"

"Hum! I want all that and more. Can you dress hair?"

"I have never tried."

"That's bad! You read and write, of course? You all read and write a good deal too much now. Still, if you *can* keep a few simple accounts it may suit me. Where have you been living?"

This was a poser.

"I fear the lady I was last living with is dead."

"But some of her acquaintances can vouch for your having been in her service?"

"I am very sorry, madam, but I am so unfortunate as to have no reference of any kind," said Cara steadily.

Her interlocutor did not reply immediately. She looked searchingly into the girl's eyes.

"How is that? Have you robbed your last mistress? Or run away with her husband, and he, in turn, run away from you?"

"No, madam," smiling faintly. "Some day, if you are so good as to try me and care to hear, I will tell you."

"You know I should be mad to try you. No one would! Why, you might steal my jewels, or—God knows what!"

"All that may seem quite possible to you, madam, and I see no use in assuring you I should not."

"Did you trim that little hat yourself?"

"I did."

"How old are you?"

"I was nineteen last month."

"Ah! What wages do you ask?"

"Whatever you like to give, madam."

"Suppose I say none—to an adventuress?"

"I should accept 'nothing' for a couple of months. Perhaps you might learn to trust me."

"Hum! It is a bad sign your accepting such an offer."

"Is it, madam? Food and shelter are a certain amount of payment."

"True. You will not tell me your story?"

"Not now, madam."

"What is your name?"

"Leigh—Cara Leigh."

"Cara? That's not English!"

"I believe not."

"It is all out of the common. Have you any clothes?"

"No, madam, but I have enough money to buy some."

"Left them behind when you ran off, eh?"

"I did not run away."

"Now, Cara Leigh, I am going to make a fool of myself."

"I hope not, madam."

"I am going to try you, if you can come to me this evening."

"I could come with you now, only I must buy a few necessaries and a morning dress."

"Can you do that?"

"I can."

"Very good. Come in before dusk. Here"—she drew paper and ink to her and wrote rapidly—"here, sign this."—Cara read the clear, firm writing easily: "I accept service with Mrs. Bligh as lady's-maid for two months without pay, on trial. At the end of this period a new agreement to be arranged."—"Put your name here. Stay, let me date it. There, now you can

make your own future. Of course you must make up your mind to be watched."

"I know that," returned Cara quietly.

"When shall I expect you—this evening?"

"Not later than six."

"Good. Here's my address." She handed her new *employée* a card on which was inscribed: "Mrs. Bligh, 14 D—— Street, Portland Place."—"Ring the upper bell" was scribbled below in pencil.—"It is an experiment," she murmured, with a long, keen look into Cara's eyes; then, with a nod, she limped actively out of the room.

Cara followed, and after an altercation with the clerk, who considered himself cheated when a client was guilty of going into service without pay—"It looks bad, very bad," he said, shaking his head—the culprit squared matters finally by giving him her new address, and paying something in the shape of a fine.

A couple of hours' shopping ensued. Cara understood dress and her own requirements, and obtained what she wanted cheaply and quickly. Still, the diminution of her small store seemed woeful. Finally, it was not much past five o'clock when she rang the upper bell at No. 14 D—— Street, Portland Place.

CHAPTER III.

WEARY as she was, Cara Leigh noticed that there were two names as well as two bells on the door of No. 14 D—— Street. One was on a brightly-polished brass plate, which attracted notice. It bore the name of "Dr. SELBY," in large letters. Above this was a very small one, inscribed in small characters, "Mrs. Bligh."

A little elderly woman, with a large, clean cook's apron over her print dress, and an old-fashioned cap, the border neatly goffered, came to the door in answer to Cara's summons.

"Come in," she said, without waiting to be questioned. "You are the new maid of madame." Her accent and pronunciation was foreign, so was her black hair, sallow complexion, and small, keen, dark eyes.

Cara assented, and entered, glad to be at the end of her exhausting journey.

"Madame is at this moment engaged," continued the servant, "but come with me."

She led the way to a small conservatory on the first landing, which was almost filled by a flower-stand rising in graduated shelves to a considerable height. It was filled with ferns and a few flowers, the greenery predominating. Skirting round it, Cara's conductress led her to a door behind which opened into a small kitchen.

"Sit down, pray, you look as if you needed to r
looking at her searchingly. "It is warm, too, for
end of August."

Cara sank on a seat, and deposited her many pa
beside her on the floor.

"You'll be glad to go to your room, and I shal
glad to get all these packets out of my kitchen; but
must not move till you see madame. Madame has
the patience of a saint."

Cara smiled.

"I will take them away now if you wish."

"Did I not say you must not now?" Then
proceeded to get out a paste-board and various culi
ingredients when a bell sounded.

"There! There is madame who calls you."

She led the way up the stairs to what is in
houses the back drawing-room. Even Cara's eyes,
used as they were to the abodes of gentry, saw it
furnished as a dining-room—well and tastefully furnis
Indeed, it seemed quite charming to her. In an
chair near a writing-table sat Mrs. Bligh, attired
tea-gown of mauve foulard, much trimmed with
black lace. She had turned her seat away from
table to face the door, and Cara again experienced
sensation of being under fire, which she had felt
she first met her present employer.

"Well, you are punctual—What are you waiting
Marie? Go away!"—this to her elderly servant,
hastily disappeared. Again addressing Cara, she as

"Have you got enough clothes to make a decent appearance?"

"I think so, madame!"

"Hum!" A brief pause, then suddenly: "I do trust and hope you are not sickly. I cannot have a sickly person about me. It's depressing, and inconvenient, and costly. And you—you look as if you were going to die or faint."

"I never fainted in my life."

She tried vainly to smile, but the effort was too much; she could hardly keep back her tears.

"Have you had any food to-day?"—severely.

"Yes, as much as I could eat."

"Some trash in an aërated bread-shop I daresay. Now, I said I would try you, and I will; but as you are you can do no work."

She rose, took a key from a small basket which stood on the table beside her, and went to a beautiful inlaid sideboard, unlocked it, and took out a decanter and a large wine-glass from a cupboard which formed a highly ornamental upper storey at the back. She filled this with dark, ruby-coloured fluid, and gave it to Cara.

"Drink that," she said. "Sit down and drink it slowly. Then Marie shall give you some soup, and you shall go to bed. You can hardly stand."

Cara swallowed the wine. She had never tasted such wonderful stuff—velvety, soft, mellow, fruity, mild, but life-giving. Mrs. Bligh saw that her prescription was taken, though Marie did not look too well pleased at

having to prepare it. Then Mrs. Bligh ordered her to stay and mind her dinner, while she herself took Cara to her room, which was of fair size and more comfortable than any Cara had ever before slept in.

"It is next to mine," said her new mistress. "Now get to sleep, and do not get up till you feel inclined to-morrow. When you are fit I will see what you can do." She drew down the blinds and left the room, saying to herself: "I'll know her whole story before she is with me a fortnight. I fancy she is soft, but I do not think she is a fool."

What a relief it was to undress, to lie down in the soft, cool bed, to know that for a brief space, at least, she was safe and in a decent house. But her tears flowed when she thought of the women with whom she had lived on terms, at anyrate, of civility; even to severe Madame Dulac she gave tender and regretful thoughts. How suddenly and how awfully they had all been swept away! And poor, dear Susy! How shocked and grieved she would be; but a new, bright life would soon banish sadness.

How awfully alone she was! How had she dared thus to play with her life! Was it too high a price to pay for escaping her loathed stepmother? No, nothing was too costly to pay for this great deliverance. With this thought she fell into a deep, dreamless sleep.

How different everything looked in the bright morning when Cara awoke, refreshed by a night of profound repose. She guessed from the full, strong light that it

must be late, and made haste to dress as quickly as she could.

Descending to the kitchen she found Marie, the cook, busy preparing coffee, the fragrant odour of which seemed very pleasant.

"I began to think you were going to spend the day in bed!" she said in an injured tone.

"I was very tired, so I am afraid I overslept myself."

"Ah! *mon Dieu!* if you are tired playing, what will you be working? I thought I was to have a strong, active young girl to relieve me of the quantity of work that has been laid upon my shoulders, and here is a sickly, fine lady!"

Poor Cara was overwhelmed with distress at her tone; but she replied good-humouredly: "You will not say that again when we have worked together. Tell me what I am to do, and I'll do it."

"Hum!" surveying her curiously. "Here then, take up madame's breakfast. Her room is next yours. She won't let you idle, I can tell you!" A miniature loaf (a *petit pain*), Cara had never seen bread like it; also coffee and milk in a beautiful, old-fashioned silver coffee-pot and jug. "Go quietly. If you put a stain like a pin's point on the napkin madame will rage."

With some trepidation she ascended to the front bedroom where, in a large, luxurious-looking bed, Mrs. Bligh lay, well supported by lace-befrilled pillows. She was reading a newspaper, and several others lay on the bed.

The blinds had been drawn up, and Cara could see that the room was abundantly and richly furnished.

"Oh, it's you, is it? Well, I must say you do not look as if you were going to die this morning. Bring over my table, it is in the window. Now, turn it over the bed—that's it. Now, put my tray on it. That will do. Now, take away all these papers—they are no use; fold them smoothly. There is a cupboard on the landing outside; lay them in there. Have you had your breakfast? No! Well, go and get it, then bring up water for my bath, and I will give you further directions. You will have to do this room always, and your own, and dust the drawing-room. Marie is rather lazy, but she cooks divinely—and that is of the last importance. Keep on good terms with her."

So Cara was inaugurated in her new career, her new life. Her work was continuous, but not hard. Besides housemaid's ordinary duties, she was lady's-maid and messenger, and filled various other small offices besides. For some time she felt ill at ease, for she felt she was watched, but she determined to win through. Mrs. Bligh had a very uncertain temper, and sometimes spoke roughly and harshly to her. Still, there grew up a curious sympathy between them. She excited her new handmaid's curiosity and admiration, though much of her charming complexion, as Cara soon came to know, was renewed every forenoon. She was rich, for her silver and china and table-linen were all fine and costly; so were her rings and the few jewels she habitually wore. Yet she haggled

over every penny she expended; and though her meals were epicurean, she evidently battled over the tradesmen's books with her "divine cook," though the conflict, being conducted in French, she could not follow the fortune of the fray with certainty. Gradually Cara felt she was gaining ground with her mistress. It was less easy to win over the cook; but though unfriendly she was communicative—especially after a field-day with Mrs. Bligh. So Cara gathered that her mistress had been a favourite actress of the highest class. She had been long a widow, and had left the stage in consequence of an accident, in which her leg had been badly fractured, and unskilfully set, leaving her hopelessly lame. She was therefore obliged to retire, to her bitter regret. She had set up elocution classes. At present all her pupils were away, and the loss of occupation—not to mention money-making—had irritated her temper, Marie said.

Occasionally gentlemen called to see Mrs Bligh—one or two were men of business—and then, when Cara brought in tea, she generally found Mrs. Bligh talking eagerly, consulting notebooks, or studying with her visitors long lists of figures in the newspapers.

Other gentlemen were clean-shaven and extremely well-dressed individuals, with whom Mrs. Bligh laughed and talked with an air of enjoyment. Time ran swiftly on, and Cara had begun to feel at home. Her essays in millinery had pleased Mrs. Bligh—who was no mean judge—and she sometimes worked with Cara when in want of something to do.

One morning she had had more letters than usual and exclaimed, when Cara brought in her luncheon-tray: "Thank goodness, there is some chance of our getting away. I think I have let these rooms for the winter. I suppose you don't mind going abroad with me?"

"I should be very pleased to do so."

"Glad to get away from Marie, eh? How do you get on with her?"

"Better than I used. She was rather unkind and disagreeable at first, but I did not return the unkindness. One is so much happier and more tranquil when one can forgive!"

"Ay! that is true. A very great poet said that a few hundred years before you were born, child. How beautifully he said it." She paused, looking far away dreamily, and then, in the low, soft tone she could use at times, began, as if to herself: "The quality of mercy is not strained," her voice rising into fuller resonance, as with admirable expression and tenderest feeling she declaimed the exquisite lines, pausing at the words, "When mercy seasons justice."

Never had Cara heard anything like this before. She was carried away.

"Oh!" she cried, "that is real music! Say it again! Do say it again!"

Mrs. Bligh gazed at her for a moment greatly surprised; then she laughed a kindly, amused laugh.

"That is a genuine compliment," she said. "I fancy

my tongue has not lost its cunning yet. Do you know who Shakespeare was, Cara?"

"Yes, a great poet and dramatist; but I have never seen one of his plays."

"Nor read one?"

Cara shook her head.

"If you can understand him you have a great treat before you. Have you ever been to a theatre?"

"Yes, once, to a pantomime."

"Ah! pantomimes are horrid vulgarities."

"Still I enjoyed it, oh, so much!—the music and the lights and the beautiful fairies."

"They were nicer than the clown and pantaloon, were they not?"

"Yes, certainly. But it was all delightful!"

"I wonder if you have the real dramatic craze?" said Mrs. Bligh as if to herself, her eyes dwelling thoughtfully on her young handmaid. "Come!" drawing her chair to the table, and beginning her luncheon, "there is a lot to do. If you are helpful and diligent you shall go to the theatre some day."

Then Mrs. Bligh dismissed her attendant, and commanded her to eat her dinner and return quickly, as she had directions to give her.

A very busy time ensued. The silver was packed in a small chest. The more valuable ornaments also had their cases, and both were taken by Mrs. Bligh herself to the bank. Then a house-agent's man came to make an inventory. In the midst of these preparations Cara

answered the door-bell one fine afternoon to a very handsome lady, richly and becomingly dressed. She had dark, wicked-looking, brilliant eyes, and a quantity of nearly black hair. She asked for Mrs. Bligh, and gave her name as Miss Delamere. Mrs. Bligh evidently expected her, and gave her a tolerably cordial reception.

"Bring tea and make it here. Tell Marie to make some buttered toast," she said to Cara, adding to her visitor: "we are in dire confusion preparing for *you,* my dear. I want to be off on Wednesday, so be sure you send your right-hand woman to take possession on Thursday. I want to send off my cook as soon as possible she is a cormorant!"

When Cara returned with the tea equipage and spirit-kettle the two ladies were in deep conversation which she could not help overhearing. Miss Delamere was denouncing someone as a mean pig.

"Won't even go to forty-five pounds a week. Stuck at forty for ever so long, though I have to provide four new dresses, and fresh ones if the play runs four months However, he was obliged to knock under at last. I wrote to you the moment we signed the contract."

"Well, my dear, you have these rooms cheap enough, including house-linen too. But I tell you candidly, I have sent away my best ornaments. Your children are unruly cherubs, and if you want better things than I leave, you must buy them for yourself, as you can, if you choose."

"Why, I never have a shilling!"

"You are too extravagant."

"Well, never mind. How long shall you be away?"

"Till March or April. I hate the thought of coming back to my dunderheaded pupils. It's throwing pearls before swine to try and teach them. Their cash is all right, however."

"Well, if you do stay away till after Easter, or later, I should be glad to keep these rooms on. This new piece ought to run for the season, or longer. I have a rattling good part, and I intend to make it a success."

"What's this they call it?"

"'Broken Links.' There are some stunning scenes."

"I suppose so. But the new plays are very poor it seems to me."

"Oh, you think so, because you cannot act now."

"Perhaps so."

There was a pause, then Miss Delamere said in a lower tone: "Did you see the death of Tom Hammond's wife in yesterday's *Times?*"

"No; I never read the births, deaths, and marriages. I don't care who is dead or married."

"Law! my dear! what a state of heathen indifference!"

"Well, is your friend Tom regretful or rejoicing?" Miss Delamere did not speak, and Mrs. Bligh, after a moment's silence, said: "Give us each another cup, Carry, and you may go."

Carry obeyed.

Miss Delamere paid a long visit. When she was gone Mrs. Bligh rang impatiently.

"Tiresome, greedy, selfish creature!" she ejaculated, when Cara—whom she generally called Carry—came at her summons. "A fine physique, a tolerable memory, the intelligence of a parrot, have raised her to the top of the tree. Nature intended her for an impudent barmaid, and that gaping, wide-mouthed, un-idead, London public have swallowed her without a strain as Leading Lady! I have given her these rooms far too cheap. She has wasted two of my precious hours! Come upstairs with me; we have only five days to do everything in. By the way, you have but a scanty supply of clothes, eh?"

"Very scanty, madam."

"Well, I never give money, but I have a lot of odds and ends that may be useful to you. There's a grey cashmere. It was cleaned by that unfortunate French cleaner who was burnt up with all her young people She lost one of the widths of this garment, so it was a judgment. You shall have the whole lot."

By dint of driving, scolding, taunting, and unmercifully working her *employées*, Mrs. Bligh got off on the day she intended, and on the following Thursday morning Cara awoke in Paris.

CHAPTER IV.

HER residence in Paris was a revelation to Cara Leigh. Her mind developed with extraordinary rapidity in the flood of new light cast upon it.

Mrs. Bligh's choice of an abode in that pleasant capital was, as usual, guided by her economic principles, and Cara found herself settled in a large house in one of the avenues radiating from the Arc de Triomphe, which was pension and hotel in one, where you might pay for board and lodging by the week, or rent your rooms and pay for meals as you took them in the establishment. Mrs. Bligh mixed the two systems. For Cara she paid full pension (not very "full," Cara found it); for herself she kept a free hand to indulge in restaurant dinners of a higher order.

Towards the end of September people begin to return to Paris; and persons of almost all nationalities were passing through on their way to their settled homes after their summer wanderings. Mrs. Bligh met many acquaintances, and went out morning, afternoon, and evening; so Cara had little to do, and consequently felt her loneliness very keenly. How often she thought of her good, sensible Susy, and longed to let her know that her friend still lived! It was a terrible thing to have thus cut herself off from the past, with all its sorrows

and its few friendships. Then she felt the need of air and exercise, and dared not go out alone; so she took courage one morning as she assisted Mrs. Bligh to dress in her very best bonnet, gown, and cloak, in order to breakfast with a distinguished associate of the Théatre Français.

"Have you any work for me to do while you are out?" she asked.

"Well, no! All my things are new, or newly done up. You can do your own work."

"I have altered and arranged all the things you so kindly gave me, so I thought you might permit me to go out for a walk."

"A walk! With whom? I hope not with any man! That generally means going to the devil! And it is too soon for you to take that road."

Cara blushed, then she smiled.

"I assure you, madam, no man has ever asked me to go out walking with him, except once, a long time ago, and he was very stupid, so I did not go."

"Then you are going out alone? That is nearly as bad!"

"No, no! I have made acquaintance with a French girl who speaks English. She and an elderly German, who is more nurse than maid to old Mrs. Carden, are the only persons who dine at the same table with me, and she asked me to go out with her, for her mistress (that American lady who dresses so beautifully) has gone to Fontainebleau till to-morrow; so——"

"She may be a very bad companion. Now, mind what I say! Walk with her if you like, but do not go into any house, or *café,* or restaurant with her, and do not let any man join you. I shall want you about six. Don't get into any trouble and bother me. Men are a pretty bad lot everywhere, but one meets curiously evil specimens in a town like Paris. Remember, child, men are our natural enemies, though in truth we prey upon each other; then the one that feels most is snatched by Satan, and pitched to perdition. Mind you lock your box, and give the key of your room to the *concierge.* Let me know what you have seen, and where you have been. But probably you will tell me lies."

"Then, madam, if you do not think I will speak the truth, I will not trouble you with any account of where I go," said Cara with spirit.

"Well answered! You don't give me the idea of being specially false. But, good Lord! how few are true! There! I must not waste my time moralising. Go down, quick! Tell the porter to call me a *fiacre;* cab-hire is not so ruinous here as in London, but with their *pourboires* it's nearly as bad! I must not be late for *déjeuner.*"

It was a fine crisp day, and Cara felt a new creature after a long brisk walk down the Champs Élysées, along the boulevards, and back by the Rue St. Honoré, her companion meantime pouring forth a flood of information respecting the historic places they passed. She was a well-informed girl, and often spoke of her parents,

who lived some way out of Paris. Then she advised Cara to learn French, and offered to teach her. Altogether it was a very happy day, and when Mrs. Bligh returned to dress for the evening, Cara had quite forgotten the affront she had received in the morning, and was eager to tell of all she had seen and learnt.

"You look quite brisked up," returned her mistress good-humouredly. "This new acquaintance must be better educated than the generality of girls in her position."

"She was trained for a teacher, but finds it much more agreeable and better paid to be *femme de chambre.*"

"I daresay it is. It is more profitable to deal with the outside than the inside of the human head."

Henceforth Cara's days were neither sad, unoccupied, nor lonely. She was constantly with her new friend, and managed to find an hour or two for study every day. The American lady made frequent excursions, and never took her maid with her—a habit at which Mrs. Bligh sniffed suspiciously.

Time went swiftly, and Cara found, as days and weeks went over, that, though subject to fits of bad temper, which she showed roughly and coarsely, Mrs. Bligh was less and less difficult to get on with.

One evening, at the beginning of October, Mrs. Bligh came back from the opera with a bad cold. Next day she was ill and feverish. A sleepless, exhausting night ensued, then, with great difficulty, an English friend persuaded her to see a doctor. This was the beginning

of a severe attack of bronchitis, lasting, with the slow recovery, several weeks. For a considerable time Cara did all the nursing. It did not strike Mrs. Bligh that unremitting care and constant loss of rest would be too much even for her youthful strength and generous will.

The doctor, however, at length interfered.

"I must warn you, Mrs. Bligh," he said one day, at the close of his diurnal visit, "that if you will not have a nurse—at all events, for the night-watch—you'll have to send that young lady, who is so devoted to you, to hospital."

"I could not bear anyone else about me!" gasped the patient. "Carry touches me as if she loved me. It's many a year since I felt *that!* No, I could not stand a stranger!"

"It's a bad return for the poor girl's care and unselfishness to let her wear herself out; and it will be some time yet before you can be left alone," said the doctor bluntly.

He was the chief English physician in Paris, and somewhat tyrannical with his patients. He therefore had his way; and next day a sister of that admirable nursing sisterhood, the Company of Mary, was installed, chiefly to take the night work. This was a necessity, Cara felt; and yet with that queer attachment to what costs us trouble, which is one of the many contradictions of our complex nature, it distressed her to let anyone else attend on the weak, almost helpless woman, whose very exactingness drew her young handmaid to her.

It was a trying episode, and the sufferer was long held back from recovery by excessive weakness. At last the professional nurse was dismissed; Mrs. Bligh was allowed to get up, and lie on a sofa, and even to see a few of the many inquirers who had left their names. Among them were several gentlemen. Of course, Cara was not present on these occasions.

She had strict orders, however, that whenever she heard Mrs. Bligh's bell (a cord to which was hidden among the drapery of her sofa), she was to come in and warn the visitor that the doctor forbade any visit longer than twenty minutes.

"What were you studying so diligently, Carry?" asked Mrs. Bligh, one dull October day as the light was fading. It was always a trying hour to the invalid. The gathering gloom made her restless and unhappy.

"I thought you were asleep," returned Cara, rising from a seat close to the window, and laying her book on the table.

"I have been, but I woke a few minutes ago, and saw how absorbed you were. Show me your book; you are not able to read a French novel."

"I wish I were," and Cara handed her the volume.

"A French and English grammar!" cried Mrs. Bligh. "Why, where in the world did you get this?"

"I bought it!"—smiling and colouring. "Mademoiselle Delplanque is helping me to learn, and I found I must have a book or two."

"And you do not shrink from the trouble of learning?"

"No; I love it."

Mrs. Bligh was silent for several minutes, then she aid: "Light the lamp; shut out the day! That's like line in some drama. Put the little table behind me. ly eyes, like my hands and arms, and every bit of me, re still weak. There is an English paper somewhere. here is a notice of Wheatcroft's new play in it. Read to me; don't get into a flurry. I do not expect you read properly, and I shall correct you."

Quite prepared for rugged rebukes, yet anxious to ize any chance of improvement, Cara began, but was on stopped.

"Do open your mouth, and utter 'a's' properly. You re inclined to the horrible London enunciation—'lydy' r lady, and 'byby' for baby. There is no barbarism qual to it! Your natural voice is rather pleasant, but our accent is bad. Now, go on." Then, in a few inutes: "Did you understand that sentence?"

"Not quite."

"Nor I either. Read it again. Put the emphasis n the first half—again. That's better. Come, this is omething to do. You shall read to me every day. I m glad to save my eyes."

Mrs. Bligh fulfilled her promise, or threat. A few ays later she was equal to snatching the paper from ara's hands and reading a passage or two to show ow the emphasis should be placed. In short, the ocupation seemed to have a wonderful interest for her. ne evening, as she was preparing to retire, she sud-

denly asked: "Have you a tolerable memory, Carry? I mean in the committing of things—lines—to heart?"

"It is so long since I tried I can hardly say."

"Try now. Here," taking a thick book which lay beside her, "give me one of those cards. I'll put it in here. Now, learn that solemn speech there: 'To be, or not to be'—do you see it? You will be sitting up in the quiet night some time yet. Put your whole mind into it, and repeat it to me to-morrow."

After this Mrs. Bligh set Cara some task—some lines, sometimes prose, sometimes verse, frequently, and every day Cara read aloud.

Mrs. Bligh seemed to take a sudden turn for the better. She was more alert, stronger, more like her former self. Still she did not venture to dine at the *table d'hôte* in the hotel, and refrained from inviting any acquaintances to spend the evening with her. One day, after her dinner, she exclaimed suddenly: "I said good-bye to my doctor to-day, but I shall have a souvenir from him in the shape of a long bill." She paused. "I am going to leave Paris, and to have a new maid!"

"A new maid?" echoed Cara in dismay.

"Yes. Now you are thinking I am an ungrateful old woman. Well, you are not far wrong. I am selfish, and I will be selfish; but I am going into a new speculation, and this forbids my having you as my maid. I am going to provide for you. Don't suppose I am going to give you any money. No, but I shall teach you how to make it. If you are diligent, persevering, in earnest,

I can make an actress of you, and you shall pay me for my trouble and my outlay. We'll settle all that. Do you accept my proposition?"

"Accept it!" cried Cara, trembling with excitement. "Why, you give me life, the chance of fulfilling my heart's desire. I will work day and night to be worthy of your teaching. I can be your maid too."

"No, you shall be nothing I do not choose. You are mine from this moment, and you must tell me your true story. Next Monday we leave Paris for St. Remo. I will school you hard for eighteen months; then you shall learn the A B C of the boards in the provinces; and when I feel sure you can do me credit you shall appear in London. Remember, I demand absolute obedience and complete trust."

CHAPTER V.

It was morning in late December, more than a year ago, since Cara Leigh gave herself into the hands of Mrs. Bligh, and, though early, the air was warm as if it were midsummer. Cape Town was just waking up, and some fishing-boats were gliding away to the offing before the light summer breeze.

Perhaps in all the world there is no city more delightfully situated, lying as it does under the shadow of the great mountain; grey cliffs overhang it, and from among them springs a forest of pines sloping upward wherever trees can fasten their roots. The lofty peak which rises from the level crest of the huge height was lightly veiled by a rosy mist, and, further inland, some of the woods showed a silvery sheen as the leaves turned their linings to the light, when the soft and now failing breeze played over them.

Shop shutters were being taken down, the doors of inns and eating-houses were being opened. The mixed multitude of races and colours that serve the lordly white were up and doing.

As the morning advanced a man issued from one of the commonest of the hostelries near the docks. His attire was more suited to such an abiding-place than his looks. He was tall and bony, broad-shouldered and

long-limbed. His hair was tawny, his eyes—perhaps grey-blue, they looked darker sometimes. He was sunburnt to the deepest brown, his expression stern and sombre. His dark tweed trousers were well cut, and also well worn, his Norfolk jacket had seen much service —yet, in spite of a seedy and weather-beaten exterior, there was a certain air of distinction about his gait and carriage.

He turned into a street which led away up to the pleasant residences known as "The Gardens," but before reaching them he took a rough road, or rather track, which commanded a fine view of the bay. Here the foundations of some houses had been dug and left no further advanced. Some timber lay about, and on one of the logs he seated himself, looking out over the waters, now flashing in the strengthening sunlight.

He was evidently thinking hard—not wandering aimlessly through the flowery meads of reverie—the gloom deepening on his brow, for memory presented him with a picture of mingled folly and failure. Early youth was past, and hitherto his steps had tended downward. Now he began to find how difficult it was to retrace them.

As he sat thus, the sound of voices approaching struck his ear, but he did not heed. Presently two men came up a steep broken piece of ground which sloped down to the sea. One was well-dressed, the other a rough, sailor-like individual, who was talking rather eagerly and in a loud tone about "bows and masts," "lines and sheets," "sails," and other seafaring terms.

He was strongly recommending the purchase of a yacht to his companion, who was extremely cautious in his replies.

"No," he said abruptly. "Last night I thought I'd like to live and die in this place. This morning I'm of a different way of thinking. England's the place when one has made a bit of money, and in England I'll start my yacht."

As he uttered the words they came up with the solitary muser, and the last speaker paused for an instant, gazing fixedly at him. He said nothing, but continued to walk down the road towards town, listening to his companion's argument, and they disappeared. Soon the man who had been reviewing his own life, with small satisfaction, rose slowly, and retraced his steps down-hill. He had not proceeded far when he was hailed by the pedestrian, who had turned and come back to meet him.

"I am right glad to see you, Mr. Trevelyan," he exclaimed, holding out his hand—a large ponderous hand.

The other gazed at him in some uncertainty, then recognition dawned upon him. He smiled, a pleasant, frank smile, and exclaiming: "Staunton! I did not know you," took the hand held out to him.

"No wonder! I was a regular scarecrow when *you* found me, and would have been a gone coon if you had come up an hour later. I didn't think I should have found you hereabouts. I thought you would have started for England before this."

"I had hoped to do so, but business delayed me."

"Got a decent price for your ivory?"

"Pretty fair. I'm glad I took it down to the Pool. Some Dutchmen there were collecting for a firm in Amsterdam."

"So you are having a spree here before you go back to work?"

"No. I have had sprees enough in my time. I am going back to England to work, which I prefer to shooting wild beasts and living like one. Sport is fascinating so long as it *is* sport; but when you go in for making a living by it, somehow the gilt goes off the gingerbread."

"Maybe so," returned Staunton. "Why didn't you go in for diamonds? They pay best. I've been up at the diamond-mines, and did pretty well, so I am going home, too. I want to enjoy myself for awhile. Life in London was always a bitter, hard grind to me. I want to see how I like it when I have a trifle of cash in my pocket."

"It will make a difference," said Trevelyan briefly.

"Come along and have some breakfast," the other went on. "You seem an early bird like myself. I was lining with some fellows last night. They wanted me to play cards, but I knew better; I left them early. I was afraid they'd make me drink. Drink plays the deuce with me. So I got away from them, though I had almost to run for it! Now, will you come and breakfast with me, Mr. Trevelyan? I'd take it kindly

if you would. I owe you life and fortune. Another fellow might have saved my life, but he would probably have taken my belt, though I daresay neither you nor anyone else guessed what was in it."

"I guessed it was of value, and looked after it, of course."

"Right you are! I should not have cared to live had I lost that. You'll come and breakfast with me: I am putting up at Nelson's and one doesn't eat badly there."

"You have selected swell quarters," replied Trevelyan with a cynical smile; "but I have ordered my own meal, and must go back for it now."

"Where are you staying?"

"At Mrs. Macan's, near the docks."

"Lord! don't I know it! Many's the tough steak and burning curry I paid for there—through the nose too. I was before the mast in those days. Why do you go to such a place as that?"

The speaker was a man of twenty-five or thirty-five a little under middle height, broadly and powerfully built, with a square jaw, large black moustache, wild deep-set, nearly black eyes, and quantities of wavy hair somewhat lighter than his moustache, one thick lock persisted in falling over the middle of his forehead, like the tuft between a horse's ears. He was rather a good looking man of his type, though his eyes were somewhat shifty in expression.

"Why do I go to Mother Macan's? Oh, because

don't want to spend more than I can possibly help. I shall not be here long. I have taken my passage in the *Dunottar Castle.*"

"So have I, by George!" cried Staunton. "That's luck! You'll give me a lot of hints as we go home." They had turned, and were walking towards the town as he spoke. "Look here, Mr. Trevelyan, I suspect you think I am not fit company for the likes of you. Maybe I'm not; anyone can see you are, or have been, a swell. Never mind; I want to behave myself. I know you saw me beastly drunk once, at anyrate. Well, that's not going to happen again if I can help it; but it's a deuce of an *if!* I don't think I'm a bad fellow—real bad, I mean; anyway, I'm not ungrateful, and you needn't turn up your nose at me! I'd be glad to make some return for what you did for me. I shouldn't have thanked you for saving my *old* life—it wasn't worth a brass farthing; but my new one! Gad! I may be able, especially with money, to make a heaven on earth of it."

"You mistake me," said Trevelyan, feeling interested in this curious specimen. "You have quite as important a place in the human community as I have—considerably more important, if you have money. We each have our work allotted, though the positions in which we are placed may be widely different; but you will never be fit for work, or anything else, if you give way to drink. That is my objection to you, Staunton. Try and be man enough to resist this infernal pro-

pensity. As you are good enough to wish for my company, why, I shall be happy to breakfast with you."

"That's right!"—heartily. "Come along; we will see what they can give us."

The hotel where Staunton put up was one of the best in the town, though in those days (some twenty years ago) the best was no great thing. During the repast Staunton talked largely (not in any sense of boasting) about his plans and projects, asking advice, yet keeping a curious reserve in some directions. He had evidently made up his mind to establish an intimacy with his benefactor during the homeward voyage, but Trevelyan was by no means responsive.

"We'll talk about that when we are walking the deck of a fine night," observed Staunton, *à propos* of some question which troubled him.

"I don't think we shall," was the answer. "You, I suppose, will be in the saloon; I am going third."

"Gad! you must not!" eagerly. "It's not fit for you. Look here, Mr. Trevelyan, that's a thing you might let me do. I'll take your passage first-class. You'd be a help to me and a credit to me. The money doesn't count a bit—not a bit. I have plenty on me now. I'll have a lot more after I get home and settle matters. I'll go down to the office this morning."

"No, my good fellow," interrupted the other, "you shall do nothing of the kind. Understand me, once for all. If we are to be friends there must be no mention

of money between us. I never accepted a money favour from any man, and I never will."

Something in his tone discomfited and silenced the other.

"Well," he said, in a grumbling tone, "I suppose I can come on the foc'sle and talk to you sometimes?"

"Oh, no doubt," carelessly. "If we have fine weather," continued Trevelyan, "I shall do a lot of writing during the voyage."

"And when you get to London what are you going to do?" asked Staunton earnestly.

"Whatever my hand findeth, and with all diligence," said Trevelyan smiling. "I fancy I am a scribbler by nature."

"What!" cried the other in a tone of awe, as if grasping the idea by an effort, "do you mean to write books?"

"Yes, if anyone will pay me for them."

"That must be awful hard work?"

"If it is hard work it must be impossible, but it is work I like."

"Why, Mr. Trevelyan, you are not going?"

"I must. I have an appointment to keep, and must be off."

As Trevelyan made his way to the offices of a well-known firm he thought a good deal of the chance which had thrown him into the society of so odd a specimen as this man Staunton. "There are all sorts of possibilities in the fellow's nature," he mused, "even of

crime. He shall not fasten on me, however. It would be too great a nuisance, and do him no particular good. So far he has not been unlucky to me. What drivelling nonsense it is to talk of people or things being 'lucky' to one! Yet it is a universal weakness. Will the ever-spreading current of discovery some day reveal the laws which govern these curious mental conditions?"

Then his thoughts naturally centred on his own affairs.

Some seven years before he had turned his back on London, on the society of his equals, on the hopes of his early life, a ruined man—ruined by his own folly, extravagance, and obstinacy. It had been a bitter lesson, but, as he acknowledged to himself, deserved. After many hardships and steady self-denial, he had crept slowly upward; by hard labour he had earned sufficient to take a share in a hunting expedition, thence to one on his own account; and finally found himself in sufficent funds to venture back to civilisation, which suited him better than the wild loneliness of a hunter's life, much as he loved sport.

It was on his last expedition, when making his way coastward, that Trevelyan came across a solitary traveller lying ill and badly hurt on the veldt, having fallen from his horse and dislocated his shoulder when exhausted by the vain effort to keep in the saddle, suffering from malarial fever. His horse had strayed away, and he had lost all hope when Trevelyan found him and enacted the good Samaritan. He halted his little caravan

outspanned his oxen, established the stranger as best he could under shelter of the tent at the back of his waggon, and nursed him into sufficient convalescence to be able, after a few days, to move on, losing thereby much valuable time. The sufferer had but little money, apparently. He was, however, almost nervously anxious and careful respecting a leather belt which he wore under his clothes, and which Trevelyan supposed contained valuables.

Once on the road to recovery the stranger's progress was rapid, and on reaching a trading post, where Trevelyan rested for a short space, he was strong enough to mount a horse; so, with a guide he set out, hoping to reach his destination more rapidly. Trevelyan heard no more of him until their accidental encounter above described.

"Now," reflected Trevelyan. "I can, by strict economy, hold out for two or three years while waiting the pleasure of the editors and publishers. If I fail, I must keep wherewithal to start afresh in some less intellectual line. I'll feel strange enough roaming through the 'great city' once more. I wonder if the fellows I used to know will recognise me. Gad! I'll be glad to see Herbert. He wasn't worth much, perhaps, but deuced amusing and companionable."

These musings brought him to the shipping-office.

The day but one after, the *Dunottar Castle* sailed for London, with a full cargo and every berth engaged. In the first-class passenger list the name of "Mr. John

Staunton" was visible; a sort of "nobility patent," which pleased and amused that personage very much.

"Do you see that?" he asked, pointing out the entry, when the last batch of newspapers was brought on board. "Lord! what a 'heave' a trifle of money can give a fellow! Where'll I go up to when people know I have ten times more than they think?"

"Canonisation at least!" returned Trevelyan.

CHAPTER VI.

THE run home was fairly good, and not longer than usual. The predominance of fine weather gave Trevelyan time to look through his notes and scribble largely in pencil. His lucubrations and meditations were a good deal broken and curtailed by Staunton's incursions. The steerage people must not intrude on the sacred precincts of the first-class, but the first-class have the run of the deck.

"And how are you getting on?" was his first salutation. "Do they give you enough to eat?"

"Yes, and more. It is not dainty or refined food, but may I never have worse."

At first Staunton was full of the ship, her captain and crew, her steering powers and speed, but soon he drew round to talk of their destination, and what he should do when they arrived in London.

"Look you," said Staunton one fine evening, as they were smoking together in the bows, "I shall need some kind of adviser when I get home—some man who understands law, and investments, and buying and selling, and lots of things; a chap that will do your work and send your bill as a matter of course, you understand."

"Yes, I understand."

"You see, I'm an ignorant fellow, with a sort of

dread of being taken in, that makes things deuced uncomfortable."

"I'll think about it," said Trevelyan. "It's not easy to find just what you want. A legal adviser is about the mark; a man who, if he does not know a thing himself, can put his hand on those who do. Have you no friends of your own?"

"Well, yes, I have; but they will be wanting *my* help, and not able to help me. I have a mother, alive, I hope, and a small brother. I'll make sure they are provided for. When that's done, I want to get a first-rate yacht —a craft that will lick every other. I do not care what it costs."

"You must have had extraordinary luck to talk in that imperial fashion."

"Well, I have. I'll tell you all about it one day."

A pause ensued; then Staunton began again.

"And you? Are you going back to father or mother or sweetheart?"

"No," shortly, "I have no near relatives. I'm going back to fight for my own hand."

Trevelyan's manner was repressive, and Staunton was wonderfully quick at taking a hint, considering what a rough, uncultivated creature he was. Time hung heavy on his hands, and it seemed to Trevelyan that he bestowed a large quantity of it on him. He did not know the amount of self-control exercised by his admiring friend, who, had he yielded to his own inclinations, would have spent every hour of the voyage at his side. When the

passengers got up games and theatricals Staunton was full of regret that Trevelyan could not join.

"You'd lick them all into a cocked hat, I bet!" he cried.

"I do not think I should. I have no turn for acting, though I used to be very fond of seeing it."

"I've half a mind to try a turn at the games. I fancy I could throw most of the men on board," said Staunton.

"Then, why don't you? The more you are occupied and amused, the less chance of yielding to drink. I think you were a little unsteady yesterday."

"Was I? I'm not sure. Were you never drunk yourself?"

"I may have been when I was young—I mean a mere stripling—but certainly not since. Mind, I do not take any special credit on that score; drink has no temptation for me."

"That's greater luck than picking up diamonds. I fancy I could do anything if I were proof against drink. Sometimes I can go three or four months and never wish for more than a glass of beer with my food. Then a sudden greed for brandy, rum, gin, anything I can get hold of, seizes me, and I make a beast of myself."

"It wouldn't be a bad plan to take advice from some good doctor. If you let the infernal tendency master you, you had better clear out of this life altogether; there is no place in it for a drunkard."

"I know you are right, but—— Well, I'll go in for

the athletic sports the day after to-morrow. I must keep sober for that. There's a smart little girl who has been very civil to me at dinner, and other times, too; she asked me if I wouldn't join in the games."

"Oh, she has roused your ambition?"

"It's very little I care for her; but a jolly tar is always civil to the ladies."

These games and theatricals got up by the passengers afforded Trevelyan considerable relief from the too constant society of Staunton. The occupation and excitement appeared to have helped him over the threatened attack of alcoholism, for he had no outbreak during the voyage.

They were now nearing Europe, and glad to wear the warmest wraps they possessed. The weather had been broken and rough after they had passed the Canaries, and then cleared again as they neared the coast of Spain. It was a clear moonlight night, and Trevelyan was pacing the deck before turning in; as usual, Staunton joined him.

"We'll be at Plymouth by Saturday," he said, after a long silence.

"I suppose so."

"Have you ever thought of a man of business for me?"

"I have. But look here, Staunton, I must let him know something about you—and I know nothing myself. What's your object in seeking his advice, and how did you come to have all the money you seem to have?"

"Well, that is only fair. I'm the son of a gamekeeper

on a gentleman's place in Northumberland. Father died when I was a mere lad. Mother went to service; I was a bit of a handful. I was kicked out of one or two employments, so I went to sea, knocked about for three or four years; then about eighteen months ago I was very drunk and quarrelsome as my ship lay in Table Bay, so the skipper sent me adrift. I had a trifle of pay coming to me, and I joined a fellow—a North-country man. We went up to the diamond-mines, and he managed to buy a small claim. He found most money, and I most work. We were lucky—very lucky. Then I got tired; I stitched my share of the stones in my belt, and you know the rest."

"Very well, Staunton. I shall go and see Mr. Hammond when I arrive. He is a shrewd fellow. I'll tell him about you; and if he'll undertake you, you shall have a letter of introduction. Where are you going to put up?"

"Where are you?"

"Oh, I'm going to find a cheap lodging as soon as possible. I'm going on the severely economical line."

"I wish you'd stay with me at free quarters, even for a bit?"

"That's out of the question!"

"Well, there's a decent sort of a chap aboard—a commission-agent—who says there's a very good place in the Strand, the Robin Hood."

"Yes, I know it."

"Then I'll go there, and you'll write to me?"

"I will, when I see Hammond. He pulled me through

some tight places, and if he undertakes you, he wil
a capital guide; but be prepared to pay for it."

"Oh, I don't mind that. It may be cheapest for
in the end."

"That is very likely."

Silence fell upon them.

"I suppose you'll let me come and see you?" be
Staunton again.

"Yes, of course; but you'll find many more agree
comrades than I am."

"Well, I don't know that you are agreeable. In
you are not; but somehow I don't like to lose hold of y

Trevelyan only laughed.

"What a grand night!" exclaimed Staunton, ga
up at the dark softness of the sky, and at the m
which flooded the vessel with her silvery light. "Do
believe in ghosts, Mr. Trevelyan?"

"No, I can't say I do. The circle of subjects I nei
believe nor disbelieve in grows wider every day."

"Well, I believe in them. I've seen one, two or t
times."

"The same one, or a variety?"

"The same one always; but it's some time sin
have seen her."

"Her! Then it's a lady? You haven't murdered
sweetheart, and she returns to reproach you, eh?"

"No, that's the last thing I'd do. I might l
killed my man, but only in fair fight."

"How many?"

"I don't admit I have killed any."

"Well, what does this ghostly visitation indicate? I uppose, murdered or not, the young lady was your weetheart?"

"I was sweet, deadly sweet, upon *her*, but she did not like me. She was a mere slip of a girl then; and it seemed to me she was afraid of me. But I am more thoughtful, less of a savage than I used to be, so I intend o try again."

"How long is it since you met?"

"Near four years."

"Probably she is married, and dragged out of shape nd beauty by two or three children."

A heavy frown passed over Staunton's brow.

"No, she isn't," he said abruptly. "I know she isn't. he last time I saw her was fifteen or sixteen months go. She was in sore trouble then, and I could not help er. It near drove me mad; I had a bad fit of drink fter. She is ever so much too good for me; but she's oor, and she is the sort that needs nice things; so maybe, hen I can give everything, and wear fine clothes myself, nd behave quiet and decent, she will come to like me."

"A good, respectable wife you were fond of might e the making of you, Staunton; but I must say it would e rather a desperate experiment for a woman."

"I don't think it would—at anyrate, for this one. d live for her only. There! I'll not talk any more. ll go to bed and dream. Oh God, send me dreams her!"

A week later they landed in England.

At Paddington they parted company. Staunton was evidently restless and anxious, and now that he was near home eager to know how his people fared during his long absence. He did not, however, omit to obtain from Trevelyan an address where he might always find him.

As soon as Trevelyan had found a lodging where he could establish himself, at all events for the present, he made his way to Lincoln's Inn to see the man to whom he had promised Staunton an introduction if he was willing to undertake such indefinite business.

Mr. Hammond was a well-known personage in certain circles, a lawyer by profession, but dabbling largely in many lines of business more or less connected with law. To Trevelyan he had been friendly and useful when he was endeavouring to extricate himself from a tangle of debt and difficulty by paying away all but the uttermost farthing of his remaining property, and beginning life afresh on little more than a ten-pound note.

Hammond was at his office when Trevelyan called, and received him cordially.

"Well, have you picked up a fortune among the diamonds and darkies of South Africa?"

"No, not a fortune, only a small stop-gap to help towards future accumulations. What brings me here, however, is to ask if you'll undertake, as a client, a luckier fellow than myself. He is a little peculiar. I will tell you all I know of him."

When he had done so, Trevelyan added: "He fancies

himself a miliionaire on the strength of some diamonds he picked up, but I have not seen them."

"Ha! Well, let him come and see me; he and his diamonds may be a catch. I have been doing some business for a Dutch firm of diamond merchants. I'll get them to look at his treasures, so you may send him to me. Mrs. Hammond will be pleased to hear of you. You remember coming to our place to a grand kick-up we gave when my eldest girl came out? Well, my wife took a fancy to you then, and has asked me about you often. We're in Portland Place now—No. 23. Call round one Sunday afternoon. Can't talk any longer to you now. Work grows heavier every day. Look in again, and let me know what you are going to do."

Trevelyan lost no time in sending a letter of introduction to his South African acquaintance, but several days passed, and he neither made his appearance nor wrote.

Meantime Trevelyan roamed the great city with a keen sense of pleasure, though the weather was cold and wet. Occasionally he met former acquaintances, who were by no means as much surprised as he expected to encounter him in his old haunts. Most of them had heard that he had gone to shoot big game in Africa; but whether he had been absent six months or six years they were not at all sure. He worked diligently at his rough notes, and led a remarkably quiet, regular life. Sometimes he conjectured what could have happened to Staunton, especially as about a week after their interview

Mr. Hammond wrote to him enclosing an invitation from Mrs. Hammond and a line from himself, in which he mentioned that Trevelyan's *protégé* had never appeared.

"Some of the London landsharks have got hold of him, I suppose," mused Trevelyan, "and are sucking him dry."

The following evening Trevelyan had settled himself for a long spell of work, for he was anxious to offer a specimen of his book to the *Piccadilly Monthly* in the shape of a paper entitled "Elephants on the Congo," when a violent ring attracted his attention. In another minute the slavey who waited on him announced: "A gentleman for you, sir." Whereupon Staunton entered—Staunton so haggard and unkempt that Trevelyan scarcely recognised him.

"Why, Staunton!" he exclaimed, "I have been wondering what had befallen you. I hope you haven't come to grief."

"That's just what I have come to—bitter, cruel grief," and without seeing the hand Trevelyan held out, he dropped into a chair and rested his elbows on the table.

"I am awfully sorry. Tell me what has happened."

"Well, the day after we arrived I made my way to where my mother used to hang out; she had left that place, however, and I had desperate hard work to find her. When I did, she was low indeed—sick and poverty-stricken. My stepfather is dead, my young brother well-nigh in rags; but the blow that stunned me was when I learnt that the girl I spoke to you of was gone from me

for ever. She was working in some kind of a cleaning, dress-making concern; it took fire, and every soul in it was burnt up, and my dear, sweet girl among the rest. Not a creature was left to tell the story. It was on a Sunday night. Oh! I cannot talk about it. I didn't want to live for some days—no, I wished to die! Do you know, it must have been about the time I told you of—when I thought I heard her call me—that she was carried away to heaven in a chariot of fire!"

Trevelyan was much moved, and drew the poor fellow on to relieve his heart by speech. Gradually he grew calmer. He had found some consolation in making provision for his mother's comfort and maintenance, and putting his young brother to school; but now he was desolate and unemployed. He had not had the heart to present Trevelyan's letter to Mr. Hammond, and seemed altogether so undone that Trevelyan felt greatly touched, and he gave himself some trouble to rouse and inspirit him. This led to some increase of companionship. They dined together sometimes, and Staunton revived sufficiently to pay a visit to Hammond, who evidently thought the gems which Staunton had brought back were worth a large amount.

A week or two later Trevelyan had accepted a pressing invitation to dine with Staunton, and managed to draw the conversation to the once favourite subject of the incomparable yacht he was to build and sail. Gratified to find his host interested and apparently a little forgetful of his woes, Trevelyan proposed they should

turn into the Adelphi (they were dining at Gatti's), and see a very brilliant and successful burlesque, which had been running for some time. With a little difficulty they got places in the dress circle, and Trevelyan soon saw that Staunton was giving profound attention to the succession of effective *tableaux*, mixed with dances and processions, which were the mainstay of the piece. At last he suddenly seized Trevelyan's arm with an iron grip.

"Look!" he exclaimed. "She's there—sometimes it's herself, sometimes it's different. But, Oh my God! she has been let to come back—almost the same! I'll find her! I'll get her for myself. Do you see—that girl—a delicate, slight creature, with brown hair and big eyes—pale—pale and grave? Do you see her?"—this in a deep, hoarse whisper.

"I see a mass of young women—more or less painted, and very becomingly draped—but your description would apply to any one of them. Where are you going, Staunton? They'll take you for an escaped lunatic! Stay, stay, till the thing is over. I'll go with you then, and see if we can find out who the girl is."

"If it's not herself it's her double, sent to comfort me by the merciful God; and I'll know no rest till I see and speak to her! Stand by me, Trevelyan! Save me a second time!"

CHAPTER VII.

SOME ten days before Trevelyan and his self-constituted chum landed in England Mrs. Bligh and her *protégée* arrived in London.

She was moved to shorten the period of preparation he had first intended to bestow on her pupil by various motives. First, Cara had made great progress, and Mrs. Bligh grew tired of paying out and gathering nothing in. Secondly, the brilliant Miss Delamere had a good engagement offered her in America, and, consequently, terminated her tenancy of Mrs. Bligh's rooms. Lastly, she had been informed that an old acquaintance, a well-known manager, had brought out a highly successful burlesque fairy piece, and this suggested ideas which as yet she had kept to herself.

It was a dull, drizzling evening when they reached B—— Street, and Cara, who was very sensitive to exterior influences, felt down in the soles of her boots. Mrs. Bligh, too, was depressed, *i.e.* "cross," for that admirable cook, Marie, was engaged for a week longer, and could not leave until the term of her agreement had expired. The substitute sent in by Marie was carefully selected, and quite incapable of supplying her place.

With gloom on her brow, and a plethoric blotting-

book crammed with letters, memos, and whole sheets of accounts under her arm, Mrs. Bligh descended, after breakfast in bed, to the half-uncovered and exceedingly unkempt dining-room next morning.

"I am really afraid to look at the rooms," she said to Cara, who had grown very essential to her. "I know that woman; she has no value for things. That's the result of rarely paying for anything out of her own pocket. I only hope my agents, Bird and Co., have gone strictly over the inventory, and will exact a proper amount of restitution. Here, Carry, just draw up that table to the fire. I must go over my accounts carefully before we start afresh. Have you any money?"

"Yes; I have still one and sevenpence left of the last sovereign you gave me."

"Great Heavens! what on earth do you do with your money? If you do not take care of your pennies you'll always be penniless. There, go and show that stupid owl how to make my bed. If I ring the upstairs bell send the creature. I want a letter posted before eleven."

Luncheon over, with many complaints and much grumbling, Mrs. Bligh's countenance assumed a severe aspect.

"I have been going over my last quarter's accounts," she said, "and I am quite frightened at the amount I have spent. You have no idea what an awful bill you are running up, Carry!"

"No, indeed, Mrs. Bligh, I have not. I do hope you

have not overrated my chances, for I should be most unhappy if I could not repay you."

"Not repay me! Don't mention such a possibility! There is fourteen, nearly fifteen months' board, to say nothing of rent, clothes, pocket-money, travelling expenses. Of my own instruction I say nothing; I leave that to you."

"Well, Mrs. Bligh, I only long to begin and earn something; then whatever I do earn is yours till I can pay you off."

Cara's life had been rough enough to inform her that she need not break her heart over Mrs. Bligh's losses. Yet she had grown fond of the cantankerous woman, and felt that her protectress was, in her own queer way, attached to *her*.

"I only hope I have not let my silly fancy for you run away with me, and that you may not prove a failure! I have had a hard life myself," grumbled Mrs. Bligh. "Robbed of my profession while still able to command a fine position, and reduced before my time to the only vices possible for me—gluttony and avarice! I ought to say epicurism and avarice. It drives me mad to look back. If you fail I will never take up anyone again."

"After all the pains you have taken with me, I do not think I shall. But you make my heart sink when you talk in that way."

"Yes, that's just what I am afraid of. You want pluck for the stage——" She paused abruptly, then resumed: "I'll tell you what I am going to do with you.

I am going to make you 'go on' in this new fairy extravaganza thing at the Adelphi, *The Changeling*. I have written to old Bellamy, the man who is running it, and asked him to let you join in some of the choruses and dances. You'll not have to speak a line, but you'll get accustomed to face the house and learn to dance without paying for it. You will get a trifle of salary, too, a mere trifle, or *I* will ——"

"You, of course," ejaculated Cara.

"That's right. Then you will be surrounded by a crowd; that will help your courage."

"Oh thank-you, Mrs. Bligh. It will be the greatest possible help to me."

"Then you are content to begin on the lowest rung? You don't want to start with 'Juliet,' or 'Lady Macbeth?'"

"I am not quite so silly."

"Thank Heaven for that! I daresay you'll do yet. Bellamy will probably answer to-morrow. Then I'll look out for something for you to do in the provinces, even a small part, that you may get accustomed to the look of an audience and the mechanical part of your business. If it was not such a cold, miserable day, I'd go and have a look at this piece to-night."

"But it may clear up," said Cara eagerly.

Mrs. Bligh laughed, as if amused and pleased.

"I tell you what we must decide upon, Carry," she said reflectively. "You must have a new and a grander name. What shall it be?"

"Won't my own do? Not that I mind changing it much; it will help to hide me from my stepmother."

By this time Mrs. Bligh had been fully informed of Cara's unhappy story.

"Yes. What would you like? Montmorency and De Courcey—all the De's, in short are quite hackneyed. Stanley and Howard and Talbot, all the noble names in England, have been patronised over and over again. There's Fitzclarence. No, that's bordering on Royalty, but there's Fitzalan. That is a nice unpretentious name, with an aristocratic flavour about it. Yes, you shall be Miss Clarisse—I like Clarisse—Fitzalan. We'll begin it at once, then you shall never be known by any other. I shall always call you Carry; that will do nicely. Look out, dear. Is it raining still? Not much? Oh, we'll manage to get down to the Regent's Theatre to-night. I am longing to 'smell the lamps' again. Come! I want to go to the house-agent's. We'll get a bit of eatable food out of doors, and bring in something for supper."

Arrived at the Regent's, Mrs. Bligh scribbled a line on her card and sent it to the manager. In a few minutes they were ushered into a private box. The curtain drew up almost immediately, and Cara at once became absorbed in the performance. Mrs. Bligh looked on critically. The scenery, grouping, music, colouring, all pleased her experienced eye, and she was glad to watch Cara's rapt attention.

Presently the door of their box opened to admit a

gentleman in evening dress. A man under middle height, and perhaps under middle age also, thin and wiry, with purplish black hair, carefully brushed over a bald spot on the top of his head. He was clean shaven, and had a glass fixed in one eye.

"This is a delightful surprise, Mrs. Bligh," he exclaimed effusively. "I did not think we were ever to set eyes on you again. Heard you had sold your house."

"Sold my house! No, indeed. I never could live out of London for long."

They talked together for awhile, till Mrs. Bligh touched Cara's shoulder, and said in her most caressing manner: "My dear, I must introduce you to my prince of managers. This young lady, Miss Clarisse Fitzalan, is my favourite pupil, Mr. Bellamy. I intend her to take *my* place, and wipe out Delamere & Co., and all the other successful dunderheads who have managed to stultify the British public."

"I am sure you have excellent material to deal with," he returned, bowing deferentially, while Cara rose blushingly from her seat to curtsey. "But it is not every day that even the best training can evolve a Mrs. Bligh. Delighted to make your acquaintance, I'm sure, Miss Fitzalan. It can't be for this young lady you asked for a place among my chorus-girls?"

"Yes, it is. I want her to get accustomed to face an audience. I fear she is somewhat distrustful of herself."

"I am sure she need only look in the glass," exclaimed Bellamy with a grin, "to be reassured."

"Pooh! don't talk nonsense! I can assure you I depend least on her looks. But tell me, have you room for her? It will do me a favour if you can take her on. Remember, she must have a few dancing-lessons."

"Of course, I'll oblige. Perhaps you will oblige me. I have a grand scheme for next winter—that is, if this thing runs any decent time. At present it is doing well —right well."

He lowered his voice, and they continued to talk earnestly. Cara, however, went back to the realms of fancy which charmed her, and did not hear or heed them.

Next day our aspirant for dramatic honours went into harness. The beginning was not so bad as she had anticipated. Her diligent effort to learn, her unpretending simplicity, disarmed her cantankerous teacher. She was quick, too, and possessed that natural grace which is to the body what intelligence is to the mind.

At the end of a week she was allowed to "go on," as she was sufficiently fitted to join Bellamy's cohort of smart, well-made damsels, who nightly drew applause from the white-gloved dandies in the stalls as well as the "horny hand" of toil in the gallery. At first she trembled at the idea of showing herself to the immense battery of eyes fixed upon the performers, but was soon rejoiced by the rapidity with which this feeling faded away.

This was a happy time. Mrs. Bligh was in great good temper. It revived her to be again in touch with the stage. The experienced Bellamy thought well of

her pupil, and Mrs. Bligh's hopes of making a successful speculation grew stronger. Then the vagrant Marie returned and cooked her mistress savoury meat such as her soul loved; moreover, she enabled Mrs. Bligh to give dainty little suppers to former theatrical acquaintances, a pleasant and easy way of renewing old relations. Sometimes she scolded "Carry" for being so silent and mouse-like, but her pupil excused herself by pleading her ignorance and inexperience, and assuring her guide, philosopher, and friend that, though silent, she was not unobservant.

"Well, child, I expect a visitor to-morrow. You must receive him and talk pleasantly to him till I come in. Then you may go, for he has to talk business, and about you. It's time you did more than dance."

"I shall be quite sorry to leave *The Changeling* Company. I love dancing."

"You will like a better piece more," returned Mrs. Bligh indifferently.

The expected visitor did not please Cara. He was a big, burly man, with a huge voice and familiar manners. Mrs. Bligh, when she appeared, was very sweet and civil, and soon dismissed her "favourite pupil."

The pupil, however, was soon informed that the visitor, Mr. Bateson, was the lessee and manager of the Imperial Theatre, Newborough.

Newborough was a large, busy seaport on the north-east coast, renowned for its shipbuilding. The Imperial

Theatre, therefore, had a season all the year round, and a fairly good stock company of its own. The leading lady, a great favourite, was engaged to be married very soon to a wealthy coal-owner, and the manager was at his wits' end to fill her place. He feared Miss Fitzalan was too small and slight, but he was willing to try her if she would come down for three or four weeks as "walking lady and under-study" to the retiring actress.

"I shall accept for you, Carry," said Mrs. Bligh. "His terms are not so bad, and you will learn a good deal, though I have no doubt his 'leading lady' is a horror. He says he is going to bring out a very good domestic sort of piece for you. It is an old one revived."

It was the middle of April when Mrs. Bligh and her pupil found themselves settled in fairly good lodgings at the west end of Newborough, where a peep at the sea from the sitting-room window atoned to Cara for many shortcomings at which Mrs. Bligh raged.

The audiences at the Imperial Theatre, if noisy and rough, were most hearty, both in approval and displeasure. For the deeply-wronged heroine they had always abundant sympathy; for the villain "howls of hatred." Cara felt her nerves grow steadier as she grew accustomed to face the many-headed. She even began to wish for lines to repeat.

Then a benefit was given for the widow and orphans of an actor who died rather suddenly, at which Mrs.

Bligh recited some of Campbell's odes, and created quite a *furore*. She hoped this brief reappearance would incline the Newborough public to receive her pupil favourably. This performance greatly delighted and excited Cara. Could she ever hope to attain to such elocution?

Meantime she worked steadily, learning her new part. She looked forward eagerly to her first attempt at something more than the *rôle* of a super. So time sped on not unpleasantly.

About a week before the date fixed for "Miss Fitzalan's first appearance" in an important part, that young lady had been regulating and putting away some needlework which had occupied her all the afternoon when her attention was caught by the sound of wheels stopping at their door. The next minute the servant came in with a card inscribed: Captain Algernon Herbert, —th Hussars."

"The gentleman asked for Mrs. Bligh, miss. Shall I show him in?"

"Yes, and take the card to Mrs. Bligh."

Whereupon entered a young man of five or six-and-twenty, admirably dressed in sportsmanlike fashion. His hair was dark, his eyes soft hazel, his features regular, his long moustaches carefully trained. He held a felt hat in his hand, and bowed gracefully as soon as he crossed the threshold.

As soon as his eyes met Cara's they said: "You are a sweet creature," as plain as eyes could say, at which

she blushed, but also felt inclined to laugh, so absurd did it seem.

"I ought to apologise for intruding in this very abrupt fashion," he continued, in a delightfully soft, refined voice, "but I have been sent with a letter to Mrs. Bligh, which I have promised to deliver into her own hands."

"She is at home and will be here directly. Will you sit down?"

"Thank-you. Have I the pleasure of speaking to Miss Fitzalan?"

"Yes," she returned with a slight bow, half-amused and wholly pleased at being so deferentially addressed by such a Prince Charming as this unexpected visitor.

"I have only just returned from town, so have not had the pleasure of seeing you act, but I hear you have startled the playgoers of Newborough into an unwonted state of enthusiasm."

"Oh, no, indeed I have not!" cried Cara, who felt this praise must be veiled sarcasm, "I am only a walking lady."

"She is very unsophisticated for an actress, and rather taking," thought Herbert, when Mrs. Bligh entered, and he addressed her no more. "I have called," he began again, with another fascinating bow, "on behalf of my uncle, Lord Ellersdale, who used to have the pleasure of knowing you. He hopes you have not quite forgotten him. Allow me to present my credentials."

He drew a letter from his breast-pocket, and handed it to her.

"Lord Ellersdale," repeated Mrs. Bligh, gazing at his ambassador. "I remember him quite well, though I do not care to say how many years it is since we met."

She opened the letter and glanced through it, a pleased smile stealing over her face.

"He is very good," she said presently. "Lord Ellersdale is so kind as to invite us to pay him a visit" —this to her pupil—"and asks me to name my own time. Your uncle—he calls you his nephew——"

"I am his grand-nephew; but that is too clumsy an appellation for daily use," put in Captain Herbert.

"He seems, I am sorry to see, in indifferent health."

"He is terribly crippled with rheumatism, and generally bored to death. It will be doing him a great kindness if you will come and see him."

Mrs. Bligh had put on her best tone and blandest manners, and after an interchange of nothings she proposed going to Ellersdale on the next Saturday, after the evening's performance.

Promising that his uncle's carriage should be at the door of the theatre after the curtain had fallen to convey them to Ellersdale Abbey, Captain Herbert bowed himself out, leaving Cara a little aghast at the idea of going to stay with a peer of the realm.

"I feel half-frightened, my dear Mrs. Bligh!" she exclaimed frankly. "I am afraid I shall not know how to behave myself properly."

"Nonsense, Carry! Lord Ellersdale is like other old gentlemen; he will be indulgent to a quiet, inoffensive

girl. Besides, you know quite enough of etiquette to pass muster. If you intend to succeed, never distrust yourself. Keep my directions and advice in mind, and you'll do. Besides, there is something in race. You had a hard up-bringing, yet you move and look like a lady. That Captain Herbert is a good style of man. I suppose he is Lord Ellersdale's heir."

"I think he is charming!" cried Cara warmly. "He is so delightfully respectful. He spoke to me as if I were a princess."

Mrs. Bligh tossed up her chin with a contemptuous air.

"Respect, indeed! Why, child, that class of man considers women—especially women who earn their bread as you and I earn it—are created by Providence for their pleasure! Still, these high-bred gentlemen *are* very delightful. Ah! how that young fellow's voice and manner carry me back to joyous days when I was a princess—ay, a queen! And now I am a mere broken-down actress, lame, and past her work, of no value to anyone—only, *not* penniless! Thanks be to God, no! I never was wasteful. Mind *you* take care of your money when you begin to make it, Carry. The worst evil that Satan can bring out of hell's storehouse is poverty."

"Surely, Mrs. Bligh, there are worse things than poverty?"

"No, it includes every other. Avoid it a good deal more than you would sin or the Devil! Mind you put on that pretty white dress you are to wear in the ball-room scene. Let Ellersdale Abbey see its first freshness."

CHAPTER VIII.

It was with a good deal of suppressed excitement that Cara followed her patroness into the luxurious double brougham which awaited them at the stage-door on the appointed Saturday, and no sooner had the tall footman closed the door than they drove off at a rapid rate into the darkness.

"I wish I could see the country," said Cara, trying to peer through the window. "Is it not like a fairy-tale, being thus carried swiftly away to the prince's palace?"

"Yes. If Lord Ellersdale is not greatly changed, he will give us a supper worth eating. He was a regular epicure in all his pleasures, and used to be very amusing. I believe he has a fine old place. He was ambassador somewhere, but has been for some years a martyr to rheumatism. He must be about the most impatient patient in existence!"

Here Mrs. Bligh lapsed into silence, and, occupied with her own imaginings, it seemed to Cara that they soon reached the end of their journey.

At the sound of approaching wheels the entrance door was thrown open, and the carriage drew up in a stream of light from the brilliantly illuminated hall. A dignified butler, supported by a gorgeous footman, des-

cended to open the carriage door, while Captain Herbert himself came down the steps to offer his arm to Mrs. Bligh, and welcome Cara with caressing cordiality.

He led them along a corridor softly carpeted, adorned with busts, rare china vases, and bowls filled with hothouse flowers, which spread their delightful perfume around. Preceded by the butler they reached a door, which that functionary threw open, announcing "Mrs. Bligh and Miss Fitzalan," in an impressive tone.

The room they entered was luxurious and elegant. Cara's quick eye was instantly charmed with the delightful harmony of colouring, refinement of ornament, and beauty of form in the draperies and furniture. There was a good fire glowing on the hearth, for the early spring nights were chilly, and beside it, in an easy-chair, with a reading-table beside him, half lay, half sat a little old gentleman, his hair white and silky, his features fine and regular. He was very pale, singularly thin, and wore an expression of profound discontent. Between his legs lay an ebony, gold-headed walking-stick. Grasping this with one hand, and the arm of his chair with the other, he rose by an effort, and made a few steps to meet his guests. Mrs. Bligh hastened to him, and Cara could not help observing the air of distinction she had suddenly adopted. She was performing the *rôle* of a dowager duchess at least, and did it admirably.

"Welcome! thrice welcome! my dear Mrs. Bligh," said Lord Ellersdale cordially, and holding out a white, delicate hand. "You are indeed kind to come and cheer

up a wretched old recluse. Ah me! what bright days we have seen together, and now!"

"Now we must console ourselves with the pleasures of memory. It is, indeed, a treat to me to have a chance of talking over bygone times with you," returned Mrs. Bligh sweetly. "Let me present my favourite pupil, my adopted daughter, in fact."

"Charmed to receive you, my dear young lady," looking keenly at her. "You are fortunate in your instructress."

Cara dropped a deep, graceful curtsey, but did not venture to speak.

"Never was I so amazed as when I saw an announcement in our Newborough paper that the celebrated Mrs. Bligh was about to visit the town in order to introduce her pupil, Miss Fitzalan, of the Regent's Theatre, London. Algy (my nephew) was up in town then, and I was obliged to wait for a proper plenipotentiary to open negotiations with you. Who is the child? She looks like a gentlewoman. There is something familiar to me in her face."

"That's fancy, my dear Lord Ellersdale. She is a little girl I picked up for a maid, and discovered dramatic possibilities in. I may be mistaken, but I think she will be a star one of these days—or nights."

"Ah! well, we'll see, we'll see. Algy, why isn't supper announced, and where's Trevelyan?"

"Here, my lord," said a voice from the door, and a tall, tawny-haired, sunburnt man came into the room. He

ıad not the "Prince Charming" aspect of Herbert, but ıe was unmistakably distinguished, with an air of careess command which struck Cara as most imposing.

Lord Ellersdale introduced him with some *empresseıent*, and he avowed that he had been one of Mrs. 3ligh's warmest admirers before he had shaken the dust f London from his feet. Supper was announced while ıey exchanged civilities, and Lord Ellersdale deputed is nephew to conduct Mrs. Bligh, as he himself was bliged to make use of his valet's arm. Trevelyan, thereıre, fell to Cara's share. He spoke but little, though e was polite and attentive.

The supper did credit to their host's epicurean reutation, and the conversation, chiefly sustained by Lord llersdale and Mrs. Bligh, who seemed to have met every elebrity of the last thirty years, suggested to Cara a ıapter from some sparkling volume of memoirs, although [erbert managed a little talk on his own account.

Trevelyan occasionally added a shrewd remark to ıose passing to and fro, and once or twice Cara caught is eyes dwelling on her thoughtfully, she fancied pityıgly.

But the excitement, though pleasurable, was rather ıo much for the invalid peer, and before the first hour f morning all had retired.

The next morning showed an unfriendly face to Lord llersdale's guest. Thick, drizzling rain hid the landsape from sight, and filled Cara with disappointment. he had planned to steal out into the gardens, perhaps

beyond them. Now this miserable rain put an end to her project. As soon as she was dressed she went into Mrs. Bligh's room. She found that lady in bed, a breakfast-tray beside her, and various weekly papers scattered on the coverlet.

"Oh! you are dressed already. Then you had better go down to breakfast when the bell rings. Here—here is a note from our host. He seems to hold himself responsible for the weather, and apologises humbly for the rain. There, you can read it. You see, he proposes that 'Prince Charming' should help us over the morning by showing us the picture-gallery, antiquities, etc. It seems the dear old man never appears till lunch-time. Now, I am not going to climb up and down stairs and wander about cold corridors. You can do as you like."

"Thank-you. I should like to see the pictures and curiosities, and——"

"Enjoy the company of so delightful a guide, eh?" put in Mrs. Bligh sharply.

"Yes," returned Cara, with composure, "I do not meet 'Prince Charming' every day."

"That's true, only don't make a fool of yourself. Start with a large supply of scepticism. There! there's the bell. Come back to me when you have seen the treasures. I wish you had a smarter frock; still, it's not much matter."

When she reached the breakfast-room Cara found Captain Herbert and Mr. Trevelyan standing before a

large wood fire which was very acceptable on this rainy morning.

After an exchange of greeting they sat down to breakfast, Herbert requesting Miss Fitzalan to "pour out tea."

"Men look quite out of place handling a teapot, don't they, Trevelyan?—specially at breakfast."

Both men were kindly in their attentions. Both talked well and easily, and had abundance to talk about. "Miss Fitzalan" (as she began to be quite accustomed to hear herself called) was surprised at feeling so much at her ease with these two distinguished-looking men. But they were so frankly and kindly interested in what she had to say about her travels, her hopes and fears, and short experiences of the stage, that she found herself talking more than she had ever done before to strangers.

"My uncle thinks it would amuse you to look at the family pictures," said Herbert, as they rose from the table. "I don't know that you would care to see them; most of them are daubs."

"I should like to see them very much indeed, and the house too. I have never been in a place like this before. It interests me much more than the great palaces I have gone over abroad—they seem so dead and empty —this house is living."

"Then I shall go and hunt up Mrs. Draper, the housekeeper."

He left the room as he spoke. Trevelyan remained talking with Miss Fitzalan until he returned, accompanied by a stout, severe-looking matron in thick black silk,

carrying a basket which was almost filled with one bunch of keys. "Will you come and improve your mind, Trevelyan?" asked Herbert.

"Thank-you, no. I rather think we shall have a fine afternoon, so I shall clear off some scribbling, and go out in the afternoon."

For Cara a delightful couple of hours ensued, a little chilled by the presence of Mrs. Draper. It quite awed her to see such yards of stiff, stern-looking ancestors, spreading back to the Wars of the Roses; to hear of the exploits of this lord, the misfortunes of another, the evil deeds of the bad baron, the angelic qualities of his son. The women seemed rather out of it.

"Well, have we had enough of these grim knights and dames, Miss Fitzalan? Now let us have a look at the armour and crusading relics—these last are chiefly acquisitions of my uncle. Mrs. Draper, I will do showman for the rest of the curiosities. We have kept you long enough," and Mrs. Draper departed.

When they were alone, Herbert turned the conversation on his companion, and the wickedness of letting her act to such an audience as that of the Imperial Theatre. "It's too bad!" he said. "I cannot bear to think of it!" And he looked expressively into her eyes.

"But it does not trouble me in the least," returned Miss Fitzalan, with a quiet smile. "If I am to succeed I must be trained, and any audience will do for that at first—any men and women who breathe and feel, whom

I can touch. I am determined to master my art, and nothing that leads up to that end dismays me!"

"It is amazing to find so much pluck in a slight, delicate creature like you," said Herbert tenderly, with an admiring glance. Then he drew her on to talk of herself, implying, in a fascinating manner, the deepest interest in her career, and Cara gave herself up to the charm, or seemed to do so.

"How kind and friendly he is," she thought.

"What a charming woman she will be one of these days! Why should *I* not be first in the field?" said he to himself.

Both were startled when the luncheon-bell rang. They had not even noticed that the rain had ceased, and the sun was breaking through the clouds.

Lord Ellersdale looked paler and more worn than the evening before. He said that Mrs. Bligh had made him forget his years and infirmities. As the weather had taken a turn for the better, he proposed to take his "favoured guest" for a drive round the domain. Accordingly, after luncheon, a low pony-carriage, with a couple of beautiful little ponies, came to the door. Lord Ellersdale was already seated in it and held the reins. He could not bear outsiders to see him "helped."

"We must leave Miss Fitzalan to these young fellows," he said, smiling amiably, "while we old friends disport ourselves soberly."

He waved his hand, asked Mrs. Bligh if she was

all right; the tiny groom stood clear of the ponies' heads, then sprang up behind, and they were off.

"It is going to turn out a beautiful day," said Herbert, looking up at the fast dispersing clouds. "What would you like to do, Miss Fitzalan? Do you ride?"

"Oh, no, except a donkey now and then."

"Suppose we walk over to the abbey and look at the ruins? You know the Ellersdale of Henry the VIII.'s time got a lot of plunder—all this property, in fact—from the monks of old. Their Abbey was the pride of this district."

"I should greatly enjoy seeing it."

"Very well. Would you mind sitting down for half-an-hour first? A favourite horse of mine lamed himself rather badly yesterday, and I want to see him. Trevelyan here is quite a vet., learned in the school of necessity out in savage lands, so he is going to see what's best to be done. You will not think me very uncivil?"

"No, indeed, I do not. Of course, you want to see the poor horse. But I should like to sit out of doors, if I may, and take a book?"

"Yes, of course. I'll take you to a pretty point of view. What would you like to read? Oh, here's the *Pioneer*. A magazine is light to hold. There's a capital article in it, 'Dust and Diamonds', from Trevelyan's brilliant pen."

"Indeed!" looking at him with awe.

"It's rather dry. Remember *I* do not recommend it," said Trevelyan, and they started.

Trevelyan turned off at once to the stables, while Herbert guided Cara to a summer-house, octagon in shape and open on four sides. From where it stood the ground fell steeply away to a richly wooded glen; above and beyond its leafy treasures the eye rested on a fine stretch of variegated country, bounded to the north-west by dim, distant hills, and showing on the east a sweep of blue sea glittering in the sunshine.

"You are on your way to the ruins here, Miss Fitzalan. I shall not be long away," and Herbert left her.

"How heavenly sweet! how lovely!" murmured Cara to herself. "What a difference it must make to have lived *always* among beautiful places and things, far from all that is coarse or common, or harassing. What noble creatures ladies and gentlemen ought to be. I seem to breathe my native air here. How common I must seem to such men as Mr. Trevelyan and Captain Herbert. Yet they treat me as if I were a princess. They make me feel a gentlewoman."

Then thought flew back to the sordid details of her old—home? No, her old living-place. Her father, once handsome and well-bred, now the faded likeness of a gentleman. His coarse, once energetic wife, either half asleep and useless, or raging in a furious temper, according to the depth and strength of her potations. Well, thank Heaven! she had cut the cords that linked her to them for ever.

A step on the gravel of the path without : to the present. Captain Herbert had been c would go out to meet him. As she left tl house a man came up a steep foot-way fro and confronted her—a dark, broadly-built deep, passionate eyes—eyes she had known a years ago.

"My God!" he exclaimed, coming cl "Who and what are you that you mock m likeness of the girl I have lost?"

Cara by a strong effort kept herself fr his name, but a shriek of terror escaped her out in the clear air.

CHAPTER IX.

HERBERT and Trevelyan had examined and consulted respecting the same horse, and both had decided that he was being well and correctly treated by the head groom. Herbert came the more quickly to this conclusion, as he did not like to keep Miss Fitzalan waiting.

"I cannot stay any longer," he said. "Didn't you ay you would ride to-day, Dick?"—this to Trevelyan.

"I believe I did, but I have changed my mind. I hall join you in your walk to the Abbey."

"All right"—in a voice which did not quite echo the ords, and they left the stables together.

"It's wonderful to see how your uncle lights up at ıe contact with an old and favourite acquaintance," remed Trevelyan, as they walked towards the summerouse. "That Mrs. Bligh is certainly a very bright and teresting woman, well-bred, too. I remember seeing er often—when I was rather going the pace—years go."

"Yes, she had always been accustomed to good ociety—men's society. You see, her *liaison* with Stanıore began early and lasted long. What an awful reak it must have been when he married—and then

the accident which put an end to her theatrical career. She has had hard lines, but——"

A cry of terror interrupted him.

"What's that?" exclaimed Trevelyan.

Both paused.

"It was a woman's cry, and came from the summer-house. Come on!" said Herbert, and broke into a run, followed by his companion.

A minute more, and at a turn in the path they met Miss Fitzalan walking quickly, and close behind her a man, well-dressed, and somewhat sailor-like in look and gait. The young lady looked white, her large eyes strained and terrified; seeing the two men coming towards her, she seemed to lose hold of herself, and rushed to meet them, clasping Trevelyan's arm in an unconscious way.

"What's the matter? Who—who is this?" cried Herbert.

"Staunton! What the deuce have you been about?" exclaimed Trevelyan angrily, while he held Cara's hand in his own.

"Nothing—nothing to frighten anyone!" said Staunton in some agitation. "Hands off!" he added fiercely to Herbert, who had seized his collar. "Hands off, or I'll pitch you over the bank! I'm awfully sorry to have frightened the young lady, but I never meant a bit of harm. I only asked her a question. She is so like—so wonderfully like—the girl I have lost, that my head seemed to turn round, I didn't know what I was doing

for a minute. I'm awfully sorry I frightened her; and now that I am not so startled I see that she is different somehow. I heartily beg your pardon, Miss Fitzalan."

"How the deuce did you get in here?" asked Herbert.

"I drove out this morning, and, seeing the fine woods up here, I asked the lodge-keeper near this if I could walk through the glen. He said I could; so I came along, and, seeing the lady, I ventured to ask her who she was. Mr. Trevelyan knows me—knows I would not harm anyone!"

"Yes, I know Mr. Staunton! If you will take Miss Fitzalan back to the house, I will go with Staunton to find his trap," said Trevelyan. "I don't fancy he would intentionally annoy a lady."

"And I begin to fear I have made a very unnecessary fuss," began Cara in an unsteady voice. She saw the necessity of regaining her self-command if she was to preserve her *incognito*. "If I had answered this gentleman's question quietly he would have passed on; but I am, I fear, a great coward, and I beg everyone's pardon."

She drew her hands from Trevelyan's and stood a little away.

"You *have* been terrified, though," he said, in a low tone, looking into her eyes as if he would read her heart. "Come, Staunton. I'll hear your story as we go along, and plead for you with Miss Fitzalan after."

"You don't know how awfully sorry I am," urged the culprit imploringly.

"Come along, man. The less you say now the better."

Trevelyan slipped his arm through Staunton's as he spoke, and they went away together down the glen.

"I am more annoyed than I can say, to think that I left your fair side all unguarded!" exclaimed Herbert. "You are trembling still! Shall we go back to the house?"

"I think I would rather sit down in the summer-house for a few minutes, and then go on to the Abbey. What frightened me so much was that I fancied he was a madman! I do not think he is sane! He may be crazed about the girl he says he has lost, yet sane on other subjects."

"You are both plucky and forgiving. It has been an unlucky *contretemps.* Are you feeling better?"

"Yes! But tell me, how does Mr. Trevelyan come to know a man like that? He is not a gentleman!"

"No, of course not. But Dick Trevelyan has been roughing it in South Africa for some years, and has no doubt become familiar with all sorts and conditions of men."

"Mr. Trevelyan is really a gentleman himself," said Cara in a meditative tone.

"Oh yes; he is a first-rate fellow. I am glad to call him cousin! Now, are you quite sure you are equal to inspecting the ruins?"

"I am, indeed. It will prevent my dwelling on my fright and exaggerating it."

Meantime Trevelyan and his prisoner, as Staunton

imself to be, walked for a few hundred yards in
:, which was at last broken by the former.
Now we are alone, Staunton, I wish you would tell
e meaning of all this. You gave that poor girl a
of a fright."
declare to God I never intended it. Here is the
truth. You remember my being struck by the
is of a girl we saw dancing at the Adelphi to that
soul who lost her life in the fire? Well, I tried in
o get speech of her, but I never could. Then I
to Holland to see some of the Jew diamond-
ants. Your friend Hammond came with me. By
s I forgot Cara a bit, and took up with my yacht
:. Finally, I decided to have her built by
& Sutton here in Newborough. Well, I came down
and again, and the day before yesterday I was
of the day in Shaw's yard; but at night, feeling
I went to the theatre. Whom should I see but the
girl. This time her name was on the bill, and I
ound where she lived. I was all on fire to speak
! She was the image of my lost angel, and yet
were little things not like her."
think, Staunton, you are overmastered by an idea."
Maybe so. I don't care if I am or not. All I know
:em to have found her. Anyway, I went where
'es. There they told me she was staying at this
place; so, in a sort of dream, not quite knowing
was going to do, I got a trap and drove out here.
as I strolled along, I came upon her all of a sud-

den, sitting alone and a book open on her knee. I said something—I don't know what—asking if she was my own girl come back to me, or who she was. Then she started up, terrible skeared, and cried out. Now, that's the truth!"

"I believe you, Staunton. No doubt she was terrified. She must have thought you an escaped lunatic."

"That's bad! How am I to convince her that I am all right?"

"Go away, and let her forget you. Then get someone to introduce you properly, and behave like a sane man. Mind you don't let her think you mix her up with another girl."

"Look here, Mr. Trevelyan! I don't know that I do —not so much now, anyway. If she would only take to me I could do without the other. I feel as if I loved the two in one. So you think I ought to keep away for a bit?"

"I do, indeed."

"Well, I'll try. Mind you, I can give her a good home. Hammond has got me a lot of money. He's investing, too, right well, and he is uncommon good to me, so is his missis. His youngest daughter, a nice slip of a girl, is teaching me manners; and as soon as the yacht's ready they are all coming for a cruise with me. The yacht's going to be a beauty, man. Come and see her, will you, to-morrow? Then I'll go away for awhile. My poor mother is very bad; I'll stay in London, and go and see her. But I must win that girl. I'd be a

good husband, and give her all she wants; and they tell me life on the stage is hard. Who is that young swell that dared lay his hand on me?"

"Captain Herbert, the heir of all this property."

"And will he be a lord too?"

"He will."

"Then he'll never marry her! Now, I will."

"Oh, it is much too soon to think of matrimony."

"No, not a bit."

"Here's your horse and trap, Staunton. Don't tip the boy that's minding them too extravagantly. I'll come up and see you to-morrow, and we'll go and view the yacht. Where are you staying?"

"At the Wellington—it's near Sutton's yard."

A few more words, and Staunton got into the gig and drove off.

Trevelyan walked thoughtfully back. It was a bad business putting a girl on the stage, he mused. She was always defenceless. The higher her tone, the greater her refinement, the more she was at the mercy of unprincipled men. This Fitzalan girl was very sweet and taking. He was sorry for her, but it was no affair of his. Still, he did not quite like Herbert's insinuating manner with her. Should he put that shrewd Mrs. Bligh on her guard? It would probably be no use; her views respecting matrimony *versus* mere companionship were probably different from his own. "I suppose it all comes to pretty much the same in the end. Eight or nine years ago I should

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have been disposed to make a fool of myself about her too, but I have survived those green salad days."

. . . . . .

The noble host of Ellersdale Abbey, as the modern house was rather incongruously termed, was quite refreshed by his airing in such agreeable society, and dinner passed over very successfully. Afterwards Lord Ellersdale, finding that Mrs. Bligh enjoyed whist, despatched his secretary for cards. With him and Captain Herbert the necessary *partie carrée* was provided.

Trevelyan had amused them all at dinner by an account of Miss Fitzalan's encounter with her crazy admirer, which he cut short, seeing she was confused and distressed. Lord Ellersdale was exceedingly angry that any stranger should have been admitted to the grounds on a Sunday, when there were days on which the public had access to the ruins.

When the whist-players had settled to their games, Trevelyan drew a seat near Cara, who was netting a purse for Mrs. Bligh.

"I feel I ought to apologise for telling the tale of your fright. I did not think you took the occurrence so seriously."

"I confess the whole thing has affected me a good deal more than it ought; but the poor man looked so wild, so sad. I was dreadfully sorry for him."

"I suppose you are quite unconscious of having ever seen him before?"

"Oh, yes. Where did you meet him, Mr. Trevelyan?"

"Where one meets many queer characters—away in South Africa."

"Do you consider him sane?"

"Well, yes, except on one point. He was coming home, you must know, to marry his boyish sweetheart—having made a fortune at the diamond mines. To find her dead and buried must have been a blow."

"Was she fond of him?"

"I am not sure. I gather that she was rather afraid of him."

"I should think she was! I know I am. And then, you see, a madman is specially dangerous to an actress who is always *en évidence*."

"You must not let your mind dwell on such unpleasant ideas. At all events, I have persuaded him to leave, so you can 'go on' without fear of him for the present."

"It is very good of you to do this for me."

"It is not much. I should be glad to do more if I could smoothe your somewhat rugged path."

"Is it rugged because it is, though not a wooden pavement, on the boards?"

"Yes, it is a career full of pitfalls."

"That depends on the woman who treads it."

"True. I hope you do not think me presumptuous in giving my opinion?"

"No, it does not really matter. Were you my father or my brother, and objected to the life of an actress, I

should unhesitatingly renounce it. As it is, your opinions interest me in an abstract manner, that is all."

Trevelyan smiled as he thought: "A decided slap in the face I should scarcely have expected from so soft and mild a maiden."

Then she asked a few questions about South Africa, and they talked pleasantly till the rubber was over and Trevelyan cut in. While they were discussing the odd trick Cara slipped away to her room, and Herbert was left lamenting.

When Mrs. Bligh retired, more than an hour later, she found Cara still up and dressed, sitting by the table writing with a book in her hand.

"Oh, dear!" said Mrs. Bligh, sinking into a seat as if exhausted, "these stairs and passages tire me to death. What made you go off to bed so early. Prince Charming looked quite disappointed when he found you had vanished."

"I came away because the effort to talk was too much. Who do you think the madman was who startled me today?"

"How can I possibly tell?"

"Jack Staunton. The sight of him brought back all the old sense of fear and degradation. He must *never* know me."

CHAPTER X.

"I SHALL be in the box on the left-hand side of the stage as you face the audience," said Herbert, as they sat at tea the next afternoon. "I hear there will be a regular cram, so be prepared for an enthusiastic reception."

"I am not," said Miss Fitzalan quietly. "Everyone will be exhausted after bidding farewell to the favourite leading lady the night before. If I get a tolerably civil hearing it will satisfy me."

"Oh, I will start the 'claque.' Once it's begun it will be kept np. People love making a noise. Mind you look at us when you'd like a round of applause."

"No, Captain Herbert; thank-you very much. I must try to forget you and everyone, and be Gladys Mortimer really."

"What sort of stuff is the play?" asked Lord Ellersdale. "Any points in it?"

"It is rather trashy, but the central idea is not bad. The heroine conceals a will which deprives her of a fortune which ought to have been hers, for the sake of a suffering mother who is penniless, and afterwards falls in love with the man she has cheated."

"Hum—ha—yes. The plot has possibilities. Of

course there will be much virtue and sentimentality. I wish, my dear Miss Fitzalan, you would train for bad women's parts. There is so much more interest and go in bad than in good women."

"That is quite true. But then the audience must be metropolitan to appreciate them," said Mrs. Bligh meditatively.

"Oh, we are improving in the provinces," returned her host.

"I should like to act a strong part, but I do not think—indeed, I am sure, I could not manage it yet. Even my voice must be older and deeper," observed Miss Fitzalan.

"If you have the sense to feel that, I think you'll do," said Trevelyan bluntly. "And I would venture to follow my own bent were I you. Don't let yourself be stifled with too much instruction.

"Come, Mr. Trevelyan, no seditious suggestions, if you please," put in Mrs. Bligh. "I'm afraid my young friend needs a good deal more training."

"For my part I am quite satisfied with her as she is," murmured Herbert, handing cake to the young actress.

"There is the carriage," cried Mrs. Bligh, "and it is high time we tore ourselves away, my dear Lord Ellersdale."

"Pray come next Saturday and cheer me up," he urged. "Then you can tell me all about the play, and if your crazy admirer was there."

"Oh, do not mention him," said Mrs. Bligh hastily.

"Make your mind quite easy, Miss Fitzalan. I shall see my eccentric friend safe out of the town before the eventful Wednesday night."

"If you will, Mr. Trevelyan, I shall be much obliged. I should be glad not to have him there that special night. Afterwards I do not think I should mind."

"Leave it to me," said Trevelyan, as Mrs. Bligh rose and went to put on her outdoor attire, followed by Cara.

Then good-byes were exchanged, and they drove off. For some time Cara gazed from the carriage window in silence. Mrs. Bligh also uttered no word for the first mile, then she said: "This visit to Lord Ellersdale will be of service to you, Carry. Of course, you owe it to me."

"Like everything else, Mrs. Bligh."

"Well, yes. After to-morrow your salary will be increased. Even so it is a mere bagatelle compared to what you owe me. I don't fancy you will have a long engagement here, and it would kill you if you had. They want a physically robust woman, who can rant and throw herself into difficult postures. I shall write to Evans, a Leed manager, for something. I hope you won't let the idea of that crazy creature disturb you. As a public character you must be prepared for disagreeables of that kind."

"I shall not think of him on the stage so much as when I am off it. But I dread him. I always dreaded him, and I particularly dread his discovering that I am

really the same girl he knew and tormented years ago."

"If you keep your own counsel, and do not make a fuss, having a man crazy about you is rather a feather in a young actress's cap. By the way, is this Staunton the man that has been mentioned as one of the most successful of the workers at the diamond mines? The name seems familiar."

"It is a good deal too familiar to me," said Cara Fitzalan, with a sigh.

As soon as they reached their temporary home Mrs. Bligh pounced upon several letters which awaited her, and then devoted what time there remained before going to the theatre to her account-book—a "book of dread," the sight of which gave Miss Fitzalan a shiver all down her backbone.

She uttered no comment, however, and during her study of its pregnant pages, Cara occupied herself in finishing off some ends of needlework and thinking of the past two days. She wondered if Mr. Trevelyan would come to the first night of "Gladys Mortimer's Crime." Most likely he would not. She longed for his presence. There was a stern honesty in his look and manner which gave extraordinary importance to his judgment. He seemed far above out of her reach, yet his unflattering speech was not unfriendly. He spoke to her as to a fellow-worker, not as if she were a gifted baby to be petted and pampered. Still she fancied he did not quite like the career of an actress

for a woman. That, however, was the one calling for which she had a strong desire, in which she felt she might succeed.

"I must say that creature Delamere has immense audacity," exclaimed Mrs. Bligh, looking up from a letter she was reading. "She writes from some place in the States to ask if I will let my rooms to her, as she means to return in time for the winter season, when she knows what a mess she and her people made of them! I don't fancy her American trip has been so successful. They are first-rate artists themselves. However, I don't want to irritate her, so I shall say I require my house for myself, which, I believe, will be the truth. The Delamere will be spiteful enough if you succeed without rubbing her the wrong way."

"Even if I do succeed, we could never clash. We are quite different, and she is so handsome. She has an immense advantage over me."

"Perhaps so, but there is no accounting for the whims of the public."

She gazed at the clock and exclaimed: "It's time to go to the theatre, Carry. You must go by yourself. I have letters and things to attend to, and I am sick of that great, lumbering, bovine creature, the leading lady."

. . . . . .

The day of Miss Fitzalan's first appearance in an important part was made more trying than it need have been by Mrs. Bligh's restless indignation with the manager for not allowing an off-night between the fare-

well performance of the old favourite and the appearance of her successor. But the *débutante* was not nervous; moreover, she had the valuable gift of entirely losing her own individuality in that of the character she represented.

When the curtain drew up, she was pleased to see a fuller house than she expected, and recognised in the box that Herbert had indicated that gentleman and Mr. Trevelyan. They immediately began to clap, and the rest of the audience, probably touched by the youth and grace of the actress, seconded them warmly. Thus encouraged, Cara threw herself into her part, and succeeded in thoroughly interesting the spectators. Her best gift was a sweet, expressive voice, which had been admirably trained. Her emotion in one scene, where she confesses her crime, and pleaded the temptation which led her to it, was natural and effective.

When the curtain fell she was recalled twice, to receive the hearty plaudits of the audience and a beautiful wreath of white lilies and stephanotis from Captain Herbert.

The performance over, Mrs. Bligh and her pupil found Herbert, Trevelyan, and another gentleman awaiting them. Miss Fitzalan was greatly fatigued; she had not expected so much success, and the excitement rather overpowered her.

"You took us all captive!" said Herbert, pressing her hand.

"It is a triumph for you too, my dear Mrs. Bligh,"

exclaimed the strange gentleman, who seemed to know her.

"I am glad you followed your own instinct in creating the heroine," said Trevelyan in a low tone. "I think you promise well. I am glad I waited to 'assist' at what is really your *début.*"

"Thank-you very much," she murmured.

Meantime, Mrs. Bligh greeted the stranger with cordiality.

"Well, this is a pleasant surprise, Mr. Hammond. Where did you come from? I did not think you were ever found so far from the Law Courts at this season."

"I am in the path of duty, however," he returned in a fat, jolly voice. "I am here in the interest of a client, and I have my reward, for I have met *you.* Pray introduce me to your most promising *protégée.* You must persuade Mrs. Bligh not to shut herself up any more, Miss Fitzalan."

"Oh, I am going to take up my task again. We return to town in the winter if Miss Fitzalan gets anything to do."

"Which, of course, she will.

"Come," exclaimed Herbert, "do not keep Miss Fitzalan standing. My carriage is at the door. Mrs. Bligh, let me take you home. Mr. Hammond and Trevelyan will take the night train to town. It stops here at 12.30. So you had better get off."

"Do you live in London?" asked Cara, in a low tone.

"Yes. I live my working life there.

"Then good-bye."

There was an echo of regret in her voice.

"I hope to see you again before long," said Trevelyan kindly, "and write poems in your honour when you are starring in the capital."

"Trevelyan," cried Herbert, "take care of Mrs. Bligh."

"Allow me," said Hammond.

They were soon at Mrs. Bligh's lodgings, and Herbert assisted both ladies to alight, with an air of devotion.

"My uncle begs me to remind you of your promised visit," he said as he bade them good-night. "The carriage will be waiting for you on Saturday night as before. It is really doing both of us wretched bachelors a charity if you will come."

Mrs. Bligh promised readily enough, and they parted.

"I did not expect you to do so well, Carry," she exclaimed, pausing in her pupil's room. "But you would have done better still if you had followed my directions more closely."

"I intended to do so, Mrs. Bligh, but once I am on the stage and open my mouth, something enters into me, and dictates its own terms."

"That is not true art, Carry."

. . . . . .

"And so you must desert us to-day, and go back to your slavery!"

The speaker was Algy Herbert. He was walking with Cara through the wooded glen, now deliciously, de-

licately green, with lovely tints of spring, the Monday following.

"It is no slavery to me, Captain Herbert. You cannot know the charm there is in my vocation—to feel you can move your hearers to tears or laughter. That your voice can move them or your gesture stay. I hope :o do this some day. If ever I can, I would not change)laces with any princess of royal blood."

"Well, no; they have a deadly dull time of it, poor hings! But look ahead—suppose the day comes, and : will come, when you fall in love with some fellow 'ho does not like seeing you hug and kiss all the men 'ho do the lover's part."

"Oh, that does not signify," said Miss Fitzalan with rave simplicity. "It is only stage business."

"Your real lover might not take that view of the ıatter."

"Oh, I shall probably marry an actor, then we shall ct together. It would be interesting."

"Then you would fight like cat and dog. No, my ıost charming *ingénue, you* will never love an actor. shall yet see you exchange the buskin and the pinch-)eck crown for a coronet and dominion over a proud nan's heart."

Cara's reply was a sweet, frank laugh.

"She is quite delicious!" thought Herbert, gazing ıt her.

CHAPTER XI.

MISS DELAMERE, whose real name was Mrs. Kemp, had returned to London in a very bad temper. She had not suffered in pocket by her American tour, for her unfortunate "impresario" had agreed to very good terms—she would have said very bad terms—and was obliged to pay them, but her style did not suit our "American cousins." However, she contrived to send very favourable accounts of her success in the States to the papers, and tried to forget the double mortification she had received, for the wealthy stockbroker, on whom she had counted as a suitor, when his wife died suddenly married a prim, plain, elderly young lady, possessed of a large fortune, and retired from business. Miss Delamere was a fine handsome woman of the flesh and blood order, who, in some characters, produced a striking effect. She was the widow of a clerk who had left her penniless, with two children, of whom she was very fond. She was by nature sensuous and indolent, and hoped to make her profession the means of securing a rich husband. She was very popular with a certain class of playgoers, and had hitherto kept a decent reputation.

She cheered up considerably when she found herself once more within the sound of Bow Bells. In short, "her foot was on her native pavement, and her name

was Sally Kemp." First, she found her boy and girl well, and improved by school discipline, which she hastened to relax. Then it put her in good humour to read of her supposed triumphs across the Atlantic in the papers, though quite aware she had herself inspired them. Finally, and most important of all, Hawley, of Drury Lane, had offered her a splendid part in a grand romantic drama he was to bring out immediately, which he hoped would run till Christmas. Miss Delamere therefore set diligently to work, and was pretty well ready in time for the opening night, when she received a very hearty welcome back, and acted with renewed vigour.

She had been very vexed with that "stingy old cat," Mrs. Bligh, for refusing to let her her rooms, and she was still more annoyed to find she meant to occupy them herself, as she was going to bring out some stick of a girl she had taken up.

It was late autumn, and Mrs. Hammond had returned from her sojourn in some fashionable watering-place, and recommenced her Sunday evening receptions in Portland Place. These gatherings were largely attended by artistes —musical, dramatic, and pictorial—scribblers of all kinds and degrees, and a sprinkling of aristocratic Bohemians, by adoption and grace.

Mr. Hammond was a well-known man. His early achievements of untwisting the terribly tangled affairs of a celebrated but reckless actor had secured him a curiously mixed but profitable *clientèle*. He was, on the whole,

a man of integrity, but exacted scrupulously what was his due. This, however, in a jovial, kindly manner that was quite worth ten per cent. on his capital. Mrs. Hammond was an admirable partner—stout, good-looking, civil, serene, laughter-loving, but quite as shrewd as her husband. She had married one daughter extremely well, and was now looking out for a suitable partner for the youngest, her favourite.

Miss Delamere was pleased to receive a card of invitation for Sunday evenings in November and December, and presented herself with considerable regularity. Here one evening, early in the series, Mrs. Hammond asked leave to present Mr. Frederick Staunton to her.

"He is the man that made such a haul in diamonds, you know. He is worth I do not know how much! Rather a nice quiet fellow, but does not seem to enjoy himself as much as he ought."

"Indeed!" cried Miss Delamere, smiling. "Introduce him to me by all means. I will do my best to instruct him."

"I have no doubt you will," said Mrs. Hammond, shaking her fan at her. "Mr. Staunton, come here! Let me present Mr. Staunton to you, Miss Delamere. No doubt you have often seen this lady, but I do not suppose you ever had a chance of speaking to her before," and Mrs. Hammond sailed away.

Staunton came and made a bow, then he stood silently before her waiting for her to speak.

"Well, Mr. Staunton, have you seen me in Hawley's

new play? And have you no compliments to pay me?" looking at him with an engaging smile.

"Yes, I have seen you, and you are wonderful, but I don't like the piece."

"You are a severe critic. I think it rather a fine piece."

"It is fine to look at. The clothes, and jewels, and scenery are good to see, but it's not a bit natural. No one would be bad and foolish in the way you are made to be."

"I declare I am quite afraid of you. Have you been much abroad?"

"Yes, a good deal one way and another."

"You have been in Africa, I am told?"

"I have. It is a rough place."

So began a conversation, during which Miss Delamere managed to flatter and amuse her Kaffir, as she termed him. He began to feel more sure of himself, and disposed to talk. Then she suggested that she would like some refreshment, so they visited the abundantly supplied "buffet" together, and grew quite friendly.

"I'm staying at Thorpedale Mansions, near Victoria Station, and when you want a cup of tea you'll always find one on my table at 4.30 to 6 o'clock. We'll always have plenty to say. I think your adventures are most amusing. Did you say you knew Dick Trevelyan? He was a man about town before I went on the stage. I met him once or twice, then he disappeared."

"He turned up in South Africa in time to save my life, anyhow."

"Indeed! Well, bring him to see me. He used to be a regular swell; now you are a pair of African lions. Mind you come and roar gently at my tea-table."

She nodded and drove off.

This seemed very funny and witty to Staunton, and he promised willingly enough. Miss Delamere seemed a grand lady to him, and the few people he knew spoke of her as a great actress. He would tell Trevelyan that this stage queen had asked him to tea for his (Staunton's) sake.

Meanwhile, Miss Delamere reflected as she drove home that Staunton was an unusually good-looking man for a millionaire, as she supposed him to be. There was a certain air of physical force about him which rather pleased her not too refined fancy.

"He may turn out a better and livelier spec. than that muff, old Jorkins. Anyhow, he has a lot more 'go.' I'd like to see that Trevelyan again. Law! what style there was about him! There was some story about a duke's daughter jilting him, then he went under for awhile."

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Since Trevelyan had watched Miss Fitzalan in her first *rôle* several months had passed, but she was not forgotten. He had been very busy, too. He had finished his African book, and accepted more work from more than one periodical. Besides these, he had run off for a month's shooting in Scotland at the house of a relative. He was re-establishing himself in society, without any

effort on his part. Though he himself considered his past discreditable, because of his weakness and extravagance, no one else thought there was anything to be ashamed of. He was content with the moderate measure of success he had met, but a little weariness still hung on his spirit. The story of his being jilted, which Miss Delamere knew but vaguely, had been a tragedy to him, and since no woman had charmed him. He was not embittered; he was only profoundly indifferent. Of course, since he left England some eight or nine years before, he had seen very few white women. The first one, however, who inspired him with any degree of interest was Mrs. Bligh's young *protégée*.

The sources of that interest were various. First, she impressed him with a feeling that she was quite real and profoundly in earnest; then, that she was naturally refined; and lastly, a curious mixture of self-reliance and humility. Her thoughtful eyes had a charm for him from the first moment he looked into them, and he often saw them when he let his pen rest, and turned over the pages he had written always with regret, as he did not believe Miss Fitzalan's sincerity and naturalness would outlast a season or two of the excitement, the adulation, the littleness, of either stage or society life. "Women," he thought, "have no staying power, for which we have no right to blame them. Nature has been niggardly to them on this score."

On returning to town for the winter, Trevelyan had settled himself in better rooms, which he furnished in

the Westminster quarter, as he thought that London would be his headquarters for a considerable time to come. Here, then, he found himself early in November, and had been more than a week installed when a knock at his door was followed by the appearance of Staunton —Staunton so brushed, well-dressed, and generally up to the mark that Trevelyan could not help smiling as he stood up to shake hands with him.

"I suppose you thought you had got rid of me?" exclaimed Staunton. "You never let me know you had moved; but Mr. Hammond gave me your address."

"I assure you I had no intention of concealing it. Where have you been all these months? I have never heard anything of you since your yacht was launched."

"I wish you had been with me on our first trip. She is a beauty! She'll sail, ah!"

"What's this you have called her?"

"The *Sea Gull.* You must come for a cruise with me. I was going down to the Canaries, but my poor mother was taken ill, so I returned, and stayed with her to the last. She had every comfort, and hadn't much to live for. I don't think I'll go to sea again till near springtime. Mrs. Hammond and her daughter came out from Scarborough for two days with me. What do you think of that? I did the thing in style, I can tell you."

"No doubt. You are growing quite a man of fashion, Staunton."

"No, faith, I'll never be that. I do want to look and

seem like a gentleman; not a fine gentleman, a plain sort of fellow, but not common."

"Ah, well, you are not common now, and I fancy you have been steering clear of drink, from your looks?"

"Yes, I have. I have never had but three bouts since I came to England, that was just at first, before I saw my sweetheart—she that God has given back to me, as I fancy."

"That's the best tribute you can pay her. I hope you have kept your promise, and never frightened her again?"

"No, never. I have seen her pretty often though, but I took care she did not see me."

"How did you manage?"

"Oh, I found out where she was, then I used to go up in the gallery, just to look at her. She went to Leeds and Preston, then away to Edinburgh for a bit. I do not know how it is. I hate to see her act; she's someone else when she does, and I hate other fellows to look at her. I want her all to myself, and I'll have her yet."

"Do you make so sure?"

"Well, yes; nearly. You see I've a good bit of money. Hammond has invested it, and done wonders for me. I am ready to settle it all on her, and buy her a house wherever she likes, and do whatever she likes. Is'nt that better than dressing up nights, and showing herself to a lot of roughs for a few shillings?"

"Miss Fitzalan may not agree with you. She is in

love with her profession, and you may reckon her salary in pounds, not shillings."

"Anyway, I'll try," said Staunton, obstinately. "I've made friends with rather a grand lady since, at Mrs. Hammond's, a Miss Delamere she calls herself, though she's a widow with a couple of children, nice little things. I'm thinking she may help me to get what I want."

"Most likely she'll want to marry you herself."

"Oh no, she won't. She is still quite taken up about the dead chap, her husband, and cries now and again."

"Oh!" said Trevelyan.

"She says she used to know you long ago, and told me to bring you to tea. I'm going to-morrow; will you come?"

"Yes," said Trevelyan, struck with sudden curiosity to find out the drift of a plot which he fancied he saw forming, and which might possibly affect the interesting *ingénue* who had attracted his attention.

"And will you do me the honour of dining with me to-morrow, Thursday, to meet Mr. Hammond."

Trevelyan smiled.

"It gives me great pleasure to accept," he said politely.

Staunton laughed good-humouredly.

"Oh, yes," he exclaimed, "I am learning to talk like a swell. Changed times with me. Eh?"

"Changed for the better I am happy to see."

"Miss Fitzalan is in town again," began Staunton,

abruptly. "She and that snuff-the-moon of an old woman who is always with her."

"If you intend to make yourself amiable and acceptable to Miss Fitzalan, you must cultivate Mrs. Bligh almost as carefully, or she will not let you inside her doors."

"Isn't Miss Fitzalan her own mistress?"

"Scarcely any girl at her age is."

This seemed a poser to Staunton, who was silent or a minute till Trevelyan asked him where he was staying.

"There's my address," drawing out his card-case, and anding his interrogator his card. "Elizabethan Manions, South Kensington; deuced fine place, elegant ooms, can dine or not, as I like, in the house. Hamond told me about them. You'll see for yourself on 'hursday."

"Hammond seems as good as a father to you."

"As a father?" echoed Staunton, with a harsh laugh. He is a deuced deal better! I got more kicks than alf-pence from my father I can tell you, with plenty of ckings thrown in. I met Captain Herbert when I was 1 Leeds," resumed Staunton after a pause, "at the neatre. He knew me, and spoke very fair and civil; aid he was staying with an old brother officer, who was nere with his regiment; but it seemed to me he was nere for the same reason as myself—just to look at liss Fitzalan, only he could talk to her, too, for I saw nem walking together one afternoon in that big street ith all the fine shops."

"I don't know Leeds," returned Trevelyan indifferently.

"I hear that Miss Fitzalan is engaged at the Regent's Theatre. It is to be opened after Christmas."

"You are quite up in theatrical gossip, Staunton?"

"Well, I find out all I can, of course, and I know some men who act themselves—not bad fellows, but rather ignorant: one of them didn't know that a sheet wasn't a sheet but a rope."

"Well, that's not astonishing."

"I've been reading your book about Africa, Mr. Trevelyan. It's wonderful! I only do a few pages at a time; but I seem to be riding across the veldt, or crossing the river, or digging in the mines, as I read. I'm getting on faster now, but it was rather slow work at first. You must be an awfully clever fellow. I read the newspaper every morning now, and I see that you are writing something new."

"You see, writing is my trade now."

"Mr. Trevelyan, I—I want to know if you will do me a favour."

"Yes, if I can. What is it, Staunton?"

"When you go to see Miss Fitzalan, will you take me with you, and explain that I am awfully sorry?"

"But I scarcely know Miss Fitzalan, and I have no intention whatever of calling on her."

"You haven't! What an infernal nuisance!"

CHAPTER XII.

It was a very important event in Cara's life when that clever manager and popular member of society, Val Bellamy, took the Regent's Theatre, and accepted a new play by Frank Dobbs. Bellamy always got on, but never had any money. On the present, as on more than one previous occasion, he was really the agent of a syndicate. The undertaking was financed by Mr. Hammond, and the cash provided by a number of rich Jews.

Bellamy, who had a fine instinctive perception of the fitness of things, felt that the success of his new undertaking depended chiefly on obtaining the right woman to play the part of "Kitty"—the *title rôle* in his new play. He found that when he thought on the subject his memory always presented him with the image of Mrs. Bligh's *protégée,* Miss Fitzalan. They were then at Preston, where the latter was playing a small part. He ran down there one afternoon, when his project was in its embryo condition, to have a look at her, and see what she could do. The result of his inspection was a prolonged discussion, first with Mrs. Bligh, and then with Miss Fitzalan herself; finally, the high contracting parties signed the terms agreed to, and after a short engagement in Edinburgh Mrs. Bligh and Cara returned to

town to rest and study for the forthcoming piece, which was to appear with the New Year.

"There is no place like London, after all," said Mrs. Bligh, as she inspected the removal of the breakfast-things by a newly-engaged housemaid, a few days after their return.

"In spite of the fog?" asked Cara.

"In spite of the fog. It is part of London life."

"Or death?"

"Pooh! Nonsense! London has the lowest death-rate of any capital. Great powers, girl (to the servant), you are putting a perfectly clean plate on the fried bacon dish! Do you wish to double your own work? Have you no reason? Here! you must look at *my* system of packing the things, and try to make a valuable servant of yourself."

This accomplished, Mrs. Bligh's thoughts reverted to her plans for the future.

"We must not shut ourselves up, Carry. We must cultivate a little popularity. I must lay out more money, and ask some people to dinner or supper. You don't know what fathoms deep you are in my debt—two years' food and lodging, and tuition, and travelling, and dress, and Heaven knows what! Why, eight hundred pounds wouldn't pay me!"

"O Mrs. Bligh, is it possible? Why, I can never, never, never pay you!"

"It will be a bad business for me if you cannot. Now I must spend a lot more to refund what I have ex-

pended. Come, come, you must not look as if everything was lost," exclaimed Mrs. Bligh, taking warning from poor Cara's pale, horrified face, and seeing that she had made so great an impression it might depress her pupil with too deep a sense of responsibility. "Don't let your spirits go down. If you begin to doubt your own powers, your own luck, you will fail. Just don't care a hang whether you succeed or not, then you will."

"I am horrified at the idea of all I have cost you."

"Well, well, if you prove a good spec. you shall pay me twenty per cent. Come, we must go out and get some decent clothes, and then see about making friends all round. I wonder if that Trevelyan writes dramatic criticisms. If he does, *you* must manage him. I wonder where he lives. Go, put on your hat. We have heaps to do."

Cara's apprehensions and sense of guilt generally lasted a day or two after one of Mrs. Bligh's hasty but formidable summings-up, or rather sums in multiplication. She felt that her hot-tempered protectress was lighter, better, and happier since she had identified her own fortunes with that of her favourite pupil's, and at times Cara even thought she was fond of her.

Nevertheless, shopping with Mrs. Bligh was a trying process. She invariably tried, and often managed to get twenty-five shillings' worth out of a sovereign. Still, the joy of having new and peculiarly becoming garments (for Mrs. Bligh had admirable, if somewhat showy taste) was great. Then rehearsals began, and the interest of her

part (that of an *ingénue,* with rather more than usual wit and daring) was quite absorbing. Moreover, she had her own conception of it, respecting which she said little, reserving the assertion of her views till the "first night." Thus her mind was fully occupied, and that fearful ghost from the past—Jack Staunton—for the moment forgotten.

Mrs. Bligh was much pleased one afternoon on finding a small pile of cards when she came in. These were inscribed Mr. and Mrs. Hammond. The last post that evening brought two big invitation cards stating that Mrs. Hammond was at home on Sunday evenings, nine to twelve.

"Good!" said Mrs. Bligh, handing them across the table. "These are straws that show how the current sets. Hammond knows all about theatrical matters; and if they had not heard a good account of you, they would not have sent us cards, not they. Mrs. Hammond has come very much to the front of late. Her spouse is my lawyer—a capital man, but in my day nobody ever heard of *her.* We'll meet that Delamere creature. Now, we must be civil to her—mind that, Carry. She is not ill-natured to anyone who does not cross her: but I fancy she would be positively implacable to anyone who did."

"I shall speak as little as possible to her."

"*That* won't do. Talk away, and say *nothing.* Talk of her children—she is fond of them, and it encourages the right feeling. She piques herself on her immaculate reputation. It's a fine marketable quality; but the creature has a *tongue.* Did you ever see such a vulgar virago

as she is as the wicked Duchess in that preposterous historical drama at the Corinthian?"

"Yet she is greatly applauded!"

"The fact is, people love the drama so much that they think half a loaf is better than no bread. What really attracts them is a semi-sentimental domestic drama, with one or two strong situations which come in naturally. *Kitty's Dilemma* is all this. What shall you wear, Carry, on Sunday?"

"Oh, my black grenadine, I think."

"Yes, that may do, but you must have real flowers. I fancy the company will be chiefly theatrical. One meets swells—male and female—at Mrs. Hammond's sometimes, but not at this season."

When Mrs. Bligh and her *protégée* reached Portland Place the following Sunday, the handsome suite of rooms was nearly full. Somewhere a string band was stationed, which discoursed low-toned music through the evening, a continuous but unobtrusive strain of melody pervading the atmosphere without interrupting conversation. Abundant soft light, flowers, and foliage everywhere, pictures, bronzes, rich draperies, rare china, gorgeously-dressed women moving slowly to and fro, made up a dazzling scene in Cara's eyes. She felt herself both small and of no reputation as she kept close to Mrs. Bligh's elbow.

"I am charmed to make your acquaintance, Mrs. Bligh," said a stout, handsome, good-humoured-looking woman in ruby velvet and diamonds, approaching. "I have only just heard you were here. I have sent to let

Mr. Hammond know. I have so often wished to meet you! And this young lady, Miss Fitzalan. We are all looking forward to your *début.*"

Cara smiled, blushed, and curtsied.

Here Hammond came up, plump, prosperous, jovial, self-assured, and profuse in his welcome.

"So glad to see you, Mrs. Bligh, and to renew my acquaintance with you, mademoiselle. Bellamy is somewhere about; but I do not suppose you want to see your task-master! Come, my dear Mrs. Bligh, come and have some tea or coffee; and here, Miss Fitzalan, is a gentleman who wishes to renew his acquaintance with you," stepping aside to present Trevelyan.

"I don't suppose you remember me," he said, as Mr. Hammond led off Mrs. Bligh to the tea-room, and he offered Cara his arm.

"Oh yes, I remember you quite well," she exclaimed, glancing up joyously at him. "How could I forget when you advised me to follow my own instinct in the part I had to play, which was just what I wanted."

"Ah! that is the only kind of advice that is ever taken," returned Trevelyan. "I hear you are going to play in Bellamy's new piece."

"Yes, and I have a delightful, simple, natural part to play."

"Is it difficult to act a character quite different from your own?"

"I suppose it is," she replied; "but as yet I am so

:perienced I cannot know. I should like to try the of a very wicked woman."

"Which means that you are naturally very good," Trevelyan, smiling.

'Well, it sounded as if I meant that," looking up frank liking into his eyes.

'By the way," he returned, "have you seen anything ıy eccentric friend who gave you such a fright at sdale last spring?"

'Yes; one day last week. I was driving up the ıd when we were stopped by a block near Wellington :t, and I saw him walking past quickly. He did see me."

'Poor fellow!—he is, I think, quite harmless."

'Perhaps so. I cannot help having a great dread m."

'I am going back to the first drawing-room," said Bligh, passing by on the arm of her host.

Miss Fitzalan and Trevelyan followed. He stood by for awhile after they had found seats, talking ly with Mrs. Bligh, but conscious that her *protégée* ıed to all he said with interest, and looked at him unconcealed appreciation; he found himself speak- o her through her chaperon. Her attention seemed m all the more flattering because there was no tinge ›quetry in it.

'resently a gorgeous lady made her way to them ıgh the crowd. She wore white satin embroidered old, with straps of gold passementerie and fringe

over her shoulders instead of sleeves. Flashing dark eyes, and a cloud of dusky, frizzy hair, lit up by diamond stars, and arms loaded with bracelets, made her a very conspicuous object. A rather short, thick-set man, as dark as herself, and good-looking in a rugged style, kept beside her.

Cara recognised both, and unconsciously shrank a little closer to Trevelyan.

"Ah! Mrs. Bligh," exclaimed the lady, who was Miss Delamere, "I am delighted to meet you. You are looking blooming—never saw you look so well! I have been coming every day to see you; but law! you know the life. There's a hundred and one things to do every day, and only half a day to do them in. Pray introduce me to Miss Fitzalan."

"Miss Delamere—Miss Fitzalan," said Mrs. Bligh briefly.

"I've been longing to meet you," said Miss Delamere; "I have heard so much about you. You are in luck to get a leading part so soon. Of course, Mrs. Bligh's backing counts for a good deal. But, I say, haven't I seen you before?" looking keenly at her.

"Yes," said Cara composedly. "I made tea one afternoon when you called to see Mrs. Bligh."

Miss Delamere burst into a loud laugh.

"Well, this is a transformation scene with a vengeance," she cried. "Anyhow, here is a gentleman who is very anxious to make your acquaintance, Mrs. Bligh, also Miss Fitzalan's. Mr. Staunton—Mrs. Bligh—Miss

.n. If you are both nice and friendly, I daresay
l give you a sail in his yacht, which is a beauty,
d."

'hat would be a great treat," said Mrs. Bligh, with
frozen civility.

:antime Staunton had shaken hands with Tre-
and then waited to be spoken to with a sort of
patience. But Cara kept silence, and fixed her
ı the carpet. At last Staunton, while the others
agerly discussing the merits of a new actor, ven-
:o address her.

am almost ashamed to speak to you," he said
lly; "yet I have been praying for this chance. I
o say that I never wanted to frighten you. I
not frighten or annoy you for all the world could
e; but when I came upon you all unexpectedly I
y head. I could not keep back my words. I
t the dead had come back to me. I want you
ive me. I will never vex you again if you will
›eak to me sometimes!"

.d Staunton been really a stranger his appeal
have touched her; but the vivid memory of the
untrained, passionate boy, whose adoration had so
ed her, made her shrink from him with a fear
athing. It would not do, however, to show this;
'er, she had no right to offend.

ray do not say any more about it," she said gently.
ht to apologise to you for my unreasonable fright,
us exchange pardons, and forget the matter."

"You are too good, Miss Fitzalan. I feel a new man!" cried Staunton.

Though Trevelyan seemed listening to Miss Delamere's criticisms on acting in general, and the new man in particular, he had heard all Staunton said, and also perceived Cara's shrinking from her new acquaintance. A dim presentiment of coming evil stole over him, while he told himself that he was a weak idiot.

By the time he arrived at that sage conviction Mrs. Bligh had wished him good-night, given him her address, and told him she was always at home on Thursdays from three to six.

A little later Miss Delamere also bade her hosts good-bye.

"Come home with me, and let's have a talk. I'll give you a good cup of coffee and a *chasse*. It will put you right after the muddle of foreign wines we have had here," she said to Staunton.

"Thank-you. I have not tasted them. I want no wine to-night; but I want to talk to you."

"Come along, then."

So far Miss Delamere's intimacy with Staunton had prospered. She was quite aware that one of the most efficient modes of showing sympathy is to listen attentively; and Staunton, whose dominant idea was to be properly and formally introduced to Miss Fitzalan, soon confided in his new friend the wonderful story of the extraordinary likeness between the young actress and the girl he had lost.

This was rather a stunning shock to Miss Delamere, who never for a moment doubted that Miss Fitzalan would jump at such a chance; but she was not in a hurry to throw up the sponge. "He is rather a fool," he mused, "but an open-handed one. I'll hang on to him; she's sure to have some young sparks about her, and it will go hard but I'll make some mischief. If she should find something she likes better, *I'll* comfort him." She therefore listened unweariedly to Staunton's recollections and projects, finally suggesting that he should accompany her to Mrs. Hammond's, where he had a general invitation, on the chance of meeting his new old friend.

"Well, you *have* done me a good turn!" exclaimed Staunton, when they had sat down to their coffee in her little drawing-room, for which she always seemed a size or two too large. "And how easy it seemed, after all. Now I can go and speak to her anywhere; she seemed quite friendly too, and not a bit frightened!"

"Do you think you are the sort of man women would be afraid of?" she asked, with a flattering smile. "They might run to you if they were frightened, but not run from you, I bet. Now, what shall we do next? I'll make friends with her, and ask her to tea, and you can drop in by accident, and then I can be called away, I know, and all that sort of thing, eh! Will that do?"

"You are a real friend, by George! And, look here, you will find I know how to be grateful. That I shall. Now, listen to me. You promise to help

me in every way, and I swear to give you the d: marry Miss Fitzalan—you shall name your own rew —*if* I marry her through your agency. Give me and ink, and I'll write it down."

Miss Delamere hesitated. It was a temptatior close with the offer, but it might be more profitabl play a generous game.

"No, no," she cried. "We'll have no bargain besides, you may not need my help. Whether you or not, you shall have it. I pledge you my sol promise that, reward or no reward, I'll help you thro thick and thin."

"Done!" cried Staunton excitedly. "Give me y hand," and he grasped hers with painful force.

CHAPTER XIII.

"I AM certainly an ass," said Trevelyan to himself as e paused at Mrs. Bligh's door one dull, drizzling afternoon a few days after Mrs. Hammond's party. "It will) no one any good to call on Mrs. Bligh. It's all idle ıriosity, and something else, which I cannot quite define -that poor little girl's extraordinary dread of Staunton, .d his bewitchment about her likeness to his dead 'eetheart puzzle me. Did they ever meet in another ıte of existence? Well, here goes!"

He rang, ascertained that Mrs. Bligh was at home, d was conducted upstairs. Tea was going on in a :asant room irradiated by a bright fire of coal and wood, d redolent of hothouse flowers. He found Mrs. Bligh, ss Fitzalan, and Miss Delamere, the latter in a fine ;tume of dark blue velvet trimmed with rich dark fur, d crowned by a very becoming toque to match.

"Very glad to see you, Mr. Trevelyan; this is just the t of day when a visitor is very precious. Carry, bring :r the muffins."

Miss Fitzalan walked to the fireplace, and lifted a /ered plate that stood in the fender. She wore a dark ıe serge which fitted her slight, graceful figure well and ;ily. Trevelyan noticed the kind of harmony which

pervaded her movements; it gave him a vague sensation of pleasure.

"I am shocked to give you the trouble, Miss Fitzalan."

"You need not be shocked!" smiling as he took the chair offered him, and helped himself to the muffins.

"You know Miss Delamere, I think?"

"I have had the pleasure of seeing her act."

"That means to say you have forgotten me, you bad man!" cried the lady, with playful familiarity. "I remember when Sir Ferdinand Lorrimer introduced you to me. I had just made my *début*. What a pair you were, to be sure! He won the Derby that year, and you——"

"A place in your memory, I am proud to think," put in Trevelyan with a grin as she paused; "and it was my last score. After that I went to the bad, and so disappeared. I believe Lorrimer smashed up too."

"Yes, he came a worse cropper than you did."

"What has become of him? The Colonies, eh?"

"No, he did better than that. He disappeared for a bit, then he turned up again, the picture of prosperity. He had married a wealthy widow, ever so much older than he is—weighs twenty stone if she does a pound—and doesn't she keep his nose to the grinding-stone!—keeps him tied to her apron-string. He pays a high price for his prosperity. I think you did best to make off to Africa, and shoot and hunt, and make your own fortune. You see I have heard all about you from a great friend of yours—Staunton."

"Yes, I know him. Unfortunately, his idea of my prosperity is but fancy sketch."

Here the entrance of Mr. Bellamy diverted the conversation. Greetings being exchanged, the two elder ladies and the popular manager fell into earnest professional talk, and Trevelyan addressed Cara.

"I suppose you go to rehearsal, no matter what the weather, Miss Fitzalan?"

"Of course. It is a great undertaking to organise and thoroughly prepare a new piece. I mean one that has never been acted before."

"I can imagine that. And you like your part?"

"Very much indeed. I feel I can do it. It is very simple. Then I have such a good lover—that is a great help."

"I should think so," said Trevelyan gravely. "Who s the fortunate man?"

"Leonard Merton; and he is so kind and helpful."

"Merton! Isn't he rather ancient for a lover's part?" and Trevelyan felt an absurd sense of comfort in the idea hat he was.

"He is not young, but I am told he makes up wonderfully; and he *is* a good actor—quite perfect," she concluded enthusiastically.

"He is very first-rate. And my unfortunate acquaintance, Staunton—I hear he has had the enormous pleasure of making your acquaintance! Does he seem less formidable on a nearer view?"

Cara shook her head, and her soft, sensitive mouth grew very grave.

"No," she said. "I am ashamed of the sort of dread he inspires. I would not tell everyone, but I fear that he will bring me trouble or misfortune."

"Then you are superstitious?"

"I daresay I am, but I don't know. I do not know myself at all." She paused, then colouring softly, she looked earnestly yet deprecatingly into his eyes. "I wonder if I am taking a great liberty in asking you to help in keeping him away? He thinks so much of you. You do not think me very audacious?"

Trevelyan's sombre eyes softened with a kindly, almost tender expression, as he replied, in a low tone: "Nothing you could say, nothing you could ask, would seem a liberty. If I can serve you, command me. But as to Staunton, you, and you only, can choke him off. Be very steady in keeping a wide gulf between him and yourself. Don't let compassion make you intermittent in your coldness. Poor devil! I am awfully sorry for him."

"Are you? He is very foolish!"

"Some folly deserves more pity than contempt."

"If you knew——"

She stopped abruptly.

"Is there then a story of a former state of existence when he mortally offended you?"

"Ah, you are laughing at me!"

"You will tell me one day?"

"I could trust you, if——"

"Trust no man until you have known him at least ten years," Trevelyan forced himself to say, for he was a little uneasy at the strange effect of her words.

"Ten years hence I shall be quite an old woman, and have nothing to tell."

"That is a false idea. It is the old who can tell so much."

"What a change!" she said reflectively, "from expectation to memory."

There was a brief silence, then Trevelyan said, in a very low voice: "If you ever need any help, promise me you will ask for it?"

"Yes, I will, unless I think I shall give you too much trouble!"

"No reservations, please."

"Well, I must be off!" cried Miss Delamere, rising. Miss Fitzalan, my dear, will you come in to tea—not to-morrow, the day after. Old Hagan, of the Royal, Birmingham, will be with me, and it's as well to know the provincial managers. He would like to meet you; and my little kids have been asking when 'Missie Fitz' will come again."

"I'm sorry to say that we have promised to take tea with Lady Marjoribanks."

"Can't you go, Mrs. Bligh, and let Miss Fitzalan come to me? Lady Marjoribanks is a nice old thing: but it's not very amusing for a young girl to spend an afternoon in her stuffy drawing-room."

"Miss Fitzalan has accepted the invitation, and she must go."

"Really, Mrs. Bligh, you are quite horrid! Oh, you are going too, Mr. Trevelyan? Come and call a hansom for me."

Trevelyan could only profess his willingness, and bid Mrs. Bligh and Miss Fitzalan good-morning.

"What a horrid day!" exclaimed Miss Delamere, picking up her skirts scientifically and showing large feet in very smart boots; "and not a hansom to be seen. Which way are you going?"

"Down Bond Street."

"Then our roads lie together for a bit. It is nearly dark. I hate winter. Have you known Mrs. Bligh long?"

"I cannot say I have."

"She is the most awful old screw! I am sure I am sorry for that nice little girl, Carry Fitzalan, to be under her thumb!"

"I fancied Miss Fitzalan rather a favourite with Mrs. Bligh."

"Yes, just now, while she hopes to make money by her. Wait till she fails, then you will see another scene."

"Let us hope she will succeed!"

"Do you think there is a chance of her succeeding —that little, quiet mouse of a thing! She has not a bit of go in her."

"I have no right to differ from a person of your experience."

"Then she is scarcely nice-looking, and no style. How could she? Why, she was just a little servant-girl to that skinflint, Mrs. Bligh, when she began to fancy she

could make money out of her. Why, the first day I ever saw her, before I went to America, she carried in the tea, and poured it out—and a nice tidy little thing she was even then."

"Indeed," said Trevelyan carelessly.

"Not that I mind that a bit," resumed Miss Delamere with an air of magnanimity, "I have quite taken to the poor little soul, and have her to tea as often as her tyrant will let her go. That new man, Staunton, is far gone about her. With a little management he will marry her, and how far away better it will be for her to be in a good home of her own instead of blundering on the stage and making a mull of it."

"Infinitely better for every woman."

"Oh Mr. Trevelyan! I see you are one of those men who despise women who act. But I can tell you it's a fine life for those who succeed; and actresses who conduct themselves properly are just as respectable and respected as the biggest duchess in the land!"

"You mistake me, Miss Delamere. I thought of the happiness, not the respectability, of a woman's life."

"Don't try to explain it away. I know what you think, not that it matters to me one straw. By the way, isn't Captain Herbert a chum of yours?"

"He is a distant relation; but I have seen very little of him since he was a boy."

"He is a nice fellow; might be a trifle steadier. But, pw! what can you expect? There," breaking off suddenly, "there's a hansom at last. Call it, will you? Many thanks

for your escort, which has been a great bore, no doubt. Keep my skirt from the wheel, do. Adieu!"

The doors were banged together, and Trevelyan was a free man.

"What a monster of bad taste and vulgar good looks," was his reflection as he hailed the humbler "'bus" for his own use, and drove away south-west, musing on the crooked destiny which threw so naturally refined and intelligent a creature as Miss Fitzalan into such hands.

"Mrs. Bligh may be a screw, a self-interested hag, but she is not low-minded or mannered. It strikes me that Miss Fitzalan and her protectress understand each other; they seem very good friends. Appearances are deceitful often, yet I believe they are. Pray God that poor girl may succeed! If they hound her into a marriage with Staunton no horror of mediæval torture could be worse than such a fate. I dare not think of it."

Yet he thought and thought, and saw all the dangers and difficulties which were gathering round the young actress many times magnified.

While Trevelyan journeyed homeward Mrs. Bligh sent away the tea-things, and sat down beside the fire in silence. Cara took a magazine and crouched on the hearthrug, that the firelight might fall on the page. When the servant had taken away the tray and shut the door, Mrs. Bligh spoke.

"It is very bad for your eyes to read by firelight, Carry."

"I want to finish a couple of pages before I send this back to Captain Herbert."

"Did Captain Herbert send it to you? Does he write to you?"

"The last time he was in town, when we dined with him and Mr. Bellamy at the Criterion, he spoke of an article on the theatre in this magazine by Mr. Trevelyan. I said I should like to read it, and it came next day, but he did not write."

"I sometimes think he makes love to you, child."

Cara smiled.

"I don't think he does. At all events, I do not recognise any love-making in his conversation or manner."

Mrs. Bligh looked at her keenly.

"You give me the idea of speaking the truth. But God knows! Now, I want you to remember that if you let yourself be entangled in a love-affair it will be a terrible drawback just now. It will distract your mind from your work, and, perhaps, make your first attempt a failure. This would be dishonest. You are bound to make a success—bound to me. A miserable salary of five pounds a week will go but a short way to clear off our debt. Besides, Captain Herbert's love-making will do you no good. He is not the sort of man to marry out of his own grade. He would be very pleased to be your lover; he would never marry you."

Cara flushed vividly and then grew pale.

"I do not suppose he would," she said calmly, though, indeed, I have never thought about it. What

he would or would not do is a matter of indifference to me."

"I hope so. If you succeed, you can afford to wait, and when you are older and understand life more, you can decide on the line you will adopt—marriages legal or illegal. Should you fail, well, you might do worse than take that South African savage who has such a strange fancy for you."

"Mrs. Bligh! how could you entertain such an idea!"

"Child, *anything* is better than poverty!"

So saying Mrs. Bligh rose and left the room.

Cara did not resume her perusal of the page she had been reading. She sat with her hands clasped and resting on one knee, while painful thoughts chased each other through her brain. Usually she was happy enough, unless Mrs. Bligh was in a peculiarly exasperating mood, but her words just now, spoken, too, in quite a friendly spirit, seemed to hold up to the suddenly opened eyes of her pupil a vivid presentiment of her future, and she shrank from its precariousness. If she failed! That "if" seemed to take from her all force and hope and courage.

"I must not think of failure," she murmured. "I shall only ensure it." She wondered where her bright anticipations had gone to all in a moment.

"Ah! *mon Dieu!* I know now who mademoiselle reminds me of," said the voice of Marie beside her.

"I did not know I reminded you of anyone, Marie," said Cara, rising from her lowly position.

"No, for I only thought of it. But just as I came in

to look for madame and saw you sitting there, I seemed to see a charming young English lady I used to serve years ago in Tours. I was young myself then, and was *femme de chambre* to an English lady. She was the wife of an English officer, and her first baby, a little angel of a boy, fair, fair like a lily, was born at Tours. She used to sit on the hearthrug and play with the baby. Then, two years after, a little girl came. Then I married, and came away. But you are so like that sweet lady."

"What was her name?" asked Cara, with faint interest.

"Monsieur le Capitaine et Madame Ascott. Ah! those were happy days."

"Everyone's past seems better than the present," said Cara, with a sigh.

"Marie!" cried Mrs. Bligh's penetrating voice, "come here!"

"I come, madame, I come." And Marie went swiftly away.

CHAPTER XIV.

MISS DELAMERE continued to overwhelm Miss Fitzalan with attentions and invitations. Messenger-boys constantly brought notes and small offerings to that young lady. Flowers—"part of a basketful I have had from Sir William Manby's place," or, "a brace and a half of partridge, dear, which may tempt you," or, "my last photo in *The Duchess*—dagger in hand. I thought you might like to have this."

"Really, Miss Delamere quite overpowers me," said Cara, as she opened the parcel containing this last token of regard, and handed it to Mrs. Bligh.

"I cannot make her out," returned that lady, gazing at the portrait. "She looks ever so much better on cardboard than in the flesh. What a monster she will be in a few years. She is not the sort of woman to care for women."

"She begs of me to have tea with her this afternoon. I confess I like her better at home and with her children than at any other time. She is a loving mother."

"So are the cats and dogs! However, I would go if I were you, Carry. Make hay while the sun shines. If she thinks you reject her advances she will be very spiteful, and you know the Italian proverb: 'Have you fifty friends?

is not enough! Have you one enemy? 'tis too much.' is fair and dry to-day, go and drink her tea. That ill keep her quiet for awhile—till you have made your rst appearance in the metropolis."

Cara, as she generally did, acted on Mrs. Bligh's adce, and about three o'clock set out for Miss Delamere's ode. "She was at home, and expected Miss Fitzalan, it at that moment was engaged with a gentleman on isiness. Would Miss Fitzalan walk into the drawingom and sit down?" Cara complied, and, on the girl's vitation, removed her hat.

The tea-table was set with rich Crown Derby china, nd abundant cakes of various kinds. A pile of papers nd magazines lay on a small table, and from them Cara elected one. Sitting down near the window she began read, and had scarcely finished the second page when e door opened, and she heard the servant say to someone: "Miss Delamere will come directly, sir," whereupon ntered Jack Staunton. He was well dressed and marellously improved since the old days, which she remembered with so much pain and disgust. Still, her npulse was to fly from his presence. She sat very quiet, owever, determined not to offend him, but to escape as on as politeness permitted.

"Miss Fitzalan!" exclaimed Staunton, with an air of reat surprise and a rather uncouth bow.

Cara bent her head without rising.

"Mr Staunton?" she said, in a questioning tone.

"That's it! I am glad to have a chance of speaking

with you by ourselves. Though you are so good as to say I'm not to worry any more about the fright I gave you, I cannot get over it. I'd give anything to tell you why I've gone to and fro and up and down just to catch a glimpse of you—that is, if you wouldn't mind listening."

"I am quite ready to hear what you have to say," said Cara, frightened into abject civility.

"I am ever so much obliged to you. Well, then, you must know when I was a lad, about seventeen or so, my mother married a gentleman, a poor creature enough, but he *was* a gentleman. He had a little daughter, maybe eight or nine. Like a little angel she was, with red-gold hair and big eyes that looked as if they had seen Heaven. She hated—no, not exactly hated, but loathed and feared me and my poor mother, who was not bad, no, not at all, only her ways were different and rougher. I was a young blackguard then, and a nuisance to everyone. I used to hang about public-houses, and fight and drink and swear. I was not fit to sit in the same room with her, and I used to dare force her kiss me. It makes me sick to think the brute I was, for the more she shrank from me the more desperate I grew. This was later on.

"Well, at last I ran off to sea. I felt that if I didn't get away,far away, I'd murder her, all out of love. After some rough years I left my ship, or rather, I was sent adrift in Africa, and there me and another chap managed to find some diamonds. I came home to realise, and with Mr Hammond's help, I've got a decent lot of cash.

I little thought the bad news I'd hear when I found my poor mother. The sweet girl that I'd have given my life for was dead; burnt in a big fire that broke out in the place where she was working. O my God! to think of her struggles and suffering, and no one to help! Thinking of it used to drive me mad. Then, one night at the heatre with Mr. Travelyan I saw her, that is, you. Oh, cannot tell which! My heart was broken, yet glad, glad o see the likeness of her I had lost. Despairing to hink it was not herself, I was hungry to hear you speak; et there were differences."

"Of course, there must have been," said Cara tremulusly, filled with a mixture of fear and compassion. "No oubt the more you see me, the more the resemblance ill disappear."

"I am not so sure," he said, gazing at her with urning, wistful eyes. "I am getting confused. I begin ot to care which is which, so long as I see you. But do not want to annoy or frighten you."

He had looked at the clock once or twice, and now eemed to curb his eager, passionate speech.

"I can come and see you, and you will say a word o me now and again?"

"Oh, yes, of course. It is, indeed, a sore trial to ose one you loved, and in so cruel a manner," faltered Cara, when Miss Delamere came into the room suddenly n her usual noisy manner.

"Well, my dears, did you think I was lost? No; but was well employed. I had old Vicars with me for an

hour and more. He is trying to make up a touring company for the end of July, and has made me a sporting offer, so I hope you will both excuse me; not that you aren't capable of entertaining each other. Anyway, here's tea and Sally Lun, and my little birdies. I thought you wouldn't mind having them."

Tea and the children helped them through the ensuing hour. Staunton was very silent and very caressing to the little ones. He watched every movement of Miss Fitzalan's covertly, but rarely addressed her. It was a trying hour, but at last Cara ventured to ask that a cab might be called for her, and so escaped the presence of her *bête noire.*

. . . . . .

"It was a disgraceful trick!" cried Mrs Bligh, when Cara recounted her meeting with Staunton. "She lured you to her rooms just to give that South African boor a chance of worrying you. What *is* her game?"

"I cannot think," returned Cara.

"Has he bought her services?" persisted Mrs Bligh. "At anyrate, my dear, if you fail it wouldn't be a bad ending to marry that man if he would make a good settlement upon you."

Cara shuddered.

"Ah, Mrs Bligh, do not talk of failure; death would be preferable."

"Don't be a goose!" glancing at her paled cheeks and moist eyes. "You are not the more likely to fail because *I* utter the word. By the way, I had a visit

rom Captain Herbert while you were out. A very agree-
ble young fellow; knows his world. Lord Ellersdale
isists on his leaving the army and learning the *rôle* of
landlord and politician. He has been interviewing
me of the Horse Guard people about retiring."

"I can imagine Captain Herbert objecting to beat
is sword into a ploughshare," said Cara. "His work
ught always to be light and amusing."

"You are looking exceedingly ill, child," exclaimed
Irs. Bligh, looking keenly at her. "If you worry and
gitate yourself you will just destroy your own chances.
hink of nothing but the part you are going to play;
u ought to do it well. Remember, you have to create
e character, you have the first of it. That may be
rtunate or not, just as you treat it. Why should you
ouble your head about that man Staunton? He can
o you no harm. It is rather an advertisement for an
ctress to have a man running after her and making a
ol of himself. He will get tired of it in time."

"What troubles me is that I am sorry for him, and
l so dreadfully afraid of him! I do not think he is
uite sane."

"Sane? Pooh, nonsense! He has shown his sanity
y making money. Put him out of your head; we have
lenty to think about. Do you know I have had a
lendid present of grapes and flowers and game, and a
tter written by his own noble hand, from Lord Ellers-
ale. He wishes you all possible success, and says he
tends making an effort to come to town in February,

when he hopes to see us. He is really a charming old man to strangers. Awfully disagreeable to live with, I should think. It's very lucky, Carry, that you have only very simple frocks to provide, or rather, *I* have. Really, the outlay is altogether very heavy. Still, I have good hopes. Cheer up, don't look so desperately in the blues! Bellamy is coming to dinner, so you must not be a skeleton at the feast."

. . . . . .

As soon as Staunton had escaped from the fire of Miss Delamere's congratulations, innuendoes, and chaffing, he turned as usual to Trevelyan for sympathy and counsel in all time of trouble or excitement. Unfortunately, Trevelyan was out, so Staunton left with the servant his card and a message stating that he would call early next day, unless he heard from Mr Trevelyan to the contrary.

"What does he want now?" said that gentleman when he received the message. "I thought I might retire, *vice* Hammond, promoted to the task of first adviser. However, I had better see him."

So the first post next morning brought Staunton a post-card—"Will see you between twelve and one.—R. T."

At the stroke of half-past twelve Staunton rang at Trevelyan's door.

"Well, Staunton, what's wrong now?" said Trevelyan, rising from the table at which he was writing to greet him.

"Nothing wrong; rather the other way. Only I just wanted a word or two of advice."

"Sit down then. Now go ahead."

"Well, I have had a regular good talk with her—at " exultingly.

"Her? Am I to understand that 'her' means Miss ılan?"

"Yes. Who else could 'her' mean? And she was good and kind. Listened to every word I said, while ld her how desperately fond I was of her in the old s—that is, not her, you know, but the girl she is so The tears were in her beautiful eyes as I described broken-hearted I was to find that my darling was l, and then she said that I might come and speak her if I liked, so I suppose I may call at Mrs. h's, eh?"

"I am not so sure. Did you ask leave to call?"

"Well no, not exactly, but Miss Delamere said she ld take me with her."

"Oh, did she? That's different, of course."

"You see, I am getting on. How soon do you think llow might ask a girl to marry him after first meet- for it is a first meeting for her?"

"Oh, I really cannot tell. I am not up to the ›le duty of man' as regards courtship and marriage, there are handy books on the subject."

"Are you mocking?" asked Staunton, with a fiercely ɜnant glance. "Remember, it is no joke to me. I in desperate earnest."

"I see you are, Staunton, and I will treat you with lour and sincerity. Take my advice; do not let ·self grow seriously attached to this young actress.

I do not fancy you or any man has much chance with her just now. She is full of her art, and, unfortunately, you manage to scare her. Now, there are heaps of nice girls who would be very fond of you, and ready to——"

"Look here, there ain't a woman in all the world for me but this Miss Fitzalan—not one! And why shouldn't she like me, eh? Wouldn't it be better for her to be mistress in a nice home of her own, well found and furnished, with a good husband, and a good husband I'd be?"

"Of course, there can be but one answer from a commonsense point of view. But there is no accounting for fancy, and if she should not happen to fancy you, why, you are only heaping up trouble for yourself in pursuing her."

"Then who does she like—you? Why, you don't care a rap for her. Now, let me tell you I'm determined to have her for my wife; nothing shall turn me aside. Why do you try to choke me off? I warn you, I will not be interfered with, and she doesn't like you. I have watched you both, and she does not. Then who does she like? That false, fair-faced Herbert who attempted to collar me? *He* is a scoundrel! I feel he is."

"Captain Herbert," said the servant, throwing open the door, and enter Herbert, smiling, debonair, admirably dressed, groomed, and set up. A slight expression of surprise passed over his countenance as he met t

scowling glance of Staunton, but it disappeared immediately.

"How goes it?" he asked cordially, as he shook hands with Trevelyan. "Here I am again. Did not see my old chief yesterday, so couldn't leave town."

"Very glad to see you. You know Staunton, don't you?" waving his hand towards that irate person.

"By Jove! we have reason to remember each other!" cried Herbert, laughing good-humouredly. "I am afraid I was disposed to give you rather too warm a welcome to my uncle's territory the last time we met."

"To which I should have responded as warmly," growled Staunton. "I have always given as good as I get. No, I will not sit down, I'm going; only I desire, Mr. Trevelyan, that you will bear in mind what I have told you. Whoever interferes with the object I have set before me is my enemy, and I shall clear him out of my road!"

He strode to the door, flung it open, and disappeared. Herbert looked after him for a moment in great surprise, and then burst out laughing.

"Why, Trevelyan, what have we done to raise the ire of that excitable gentleman? Is he going to carry off that sweet little soul, Miss Fitzalan, from us all? By Jove! I'll break a lance with him on that score, though I suppose he would be a good match for her. He has a lot of money, hasn't he?"

"I fancy his wealth is exaggerated."

"Well, be that as it may, he is not going to have a

walk-over for that dainty darling. There's something about her that grows upon one. I believe it is the charm of the 'unexpected.' She is so tranquil, so soft, but every now and then she startles you with a flash of spirit, of fire—of possibilities which you long to develop. I shall be immensely interested in her *début* and future adventures."

"The less we occupy ourselves about the young lady the better for her," said Trevelyan drily. "But I wish her very heartily success."

CHAPTER XV.

weeks galloped apace to the end of the year, Bligh's temper grew extremely irritable. Though :alan was word perfect, and always went through arsals intelligently, there was a lack of spirit, an epression about her which suggested failure to ectress.

course, I am uneasy," said Mrs. Bligh to n one afternoon when they met at Mrs. Ham- "So much depends on her success in this play; ry seems so alarmingly quiet, not to say de- that I have grave fears. You know I have good deal on the child, and I cannot afford benevolence. I really wish that Miss Delamere all down a trap-door, or into an abyss of any of the way. She worries Carry to death. I hink what her little game is! Then she gener- ıgs that grim-looking fellow Staunton when she call, and that upsets Miss Fitzalan, though she show it usually."

ave perceived it, however," he returned thought-

:uth, Trevelyan was a frequent visitor, in spite ›rudence and the cool judgment on which he himself. Though he talked much more to Mrs.

Bligh than to her pupil, there was a curious fascination in the few words he exchanged with Miss Fitzalan, which drew him time after time in the hope of a few more. He scarcely acknowledged to himself how deep a hold the young actress was gaining on him. A profound pity was the congenial growing ground wherein his tenderness for her evolved itself and gathered strength daily. She was so lonely, so absolutely dependent on the rather crooked tempered ex-actress, who would probably throw her off if she failed. Then Herbert's admiration was a rock ahead, and Staunton might prove worse than an enemy. The more he considered her position the more difficult—possibly disastrous—it seemed. Yet how little he could do for her, and to think seriously of her would be but weakness and folly!

So he drifted, while he cheated himself by keeping up a serious and utterly unlover-like air and manner, and Cara received him with frank smiles and little confidential words.

"Perhaps *The Queen's Revenge* will not run much longer. I am told the house does not fill as it did. Then I presume Miss Delamere will seek fresh fields of conquest, and you will be relieved of her society," resumed Trevelyan after a pause.

Mrs. Bligh shook her head.

"Her name is still an attraction," she said.

"Is Miss Fitzalan here?"

"No, she stayed at home. She has a slight cold and a new book, so I left her in peace."

Here Mrs. Hammond brought up a well-known artist, who begged to be introduced to Mrs. Bligh, and proceeded to tell her the deep impression she had made upon him in his early days when she was in the zenith of her fame—a tale which never fails to arrest the attention of an actress, be she ever so old and experienced.

"I must say good-morning, Mrs. Bligh," said Trevelyan.

"You are going? Well, pray look in on us to-morrow, and give Miss Fitzalan some good advice."

. . . . . .

At last the eventful day came when Miss Fitzalan was to make her first appearance before a London audience. Mrs. Bligh presented a composed and grim aspect all day. She was rather snappish to Cara, whose calm look and manner exasperated her.

"I hope and trust you are not going to be as dead and alive when the curtain goes up," said Mrs. Bligh as she partook of afternoon tea.

"I do not think I shall. Thanks to you, I am sufficiently accustomed to the look of the house not to be in a fright, and I think I shall enjoy my part."

"Well, that's a comfort!" said Mrs. Bligh, curbing herself, as she remembered that it would be bad policy to disturb the equanimity which was an excellent basis for success. The fact was, that beyond and above a distinct desire to recoup herself for the outlay she had made, there was a deep personal desire that her

"favourite pupil" should succeed. Nor could she bear the idea that a creature, on whom she had lavished her utmost care, who believed in her infallibility, should fail.

It was a dry, clear, cold night, and a slight frost made the hard surface of the roads slippery. When they arrived, Bellamy reported that there had been an increased demand for seats that day, and that all the stalls were taken.

"I hardly expected so much," said Mrs. Bligh, and hurried away to preside over her pupil's toilet.

The house looked full and brilliant when Cara stepped on the stage, and she was kindly received. This made her feel she had a fair field and favour, she therefore threw herself fearlessly into her part. Her slight figure and girlish look appealed to the audience, while her voice, which was most musical, yet penetrating, gave pleasure to her hearers.

Trevelyan and Herbert sat together in the stalls, and both were surprised by the sense of humour shown by the *débutante*, and her thorough comprehension of the character she represented.

The plot was extremely simple. An old bachelor Indian general had retired and come to England, intending to make a home for his ward, a wealthy heiress, whom he intends to marry to his nephew, a young and impecunious engineer. He has never seen his ward since her babyhood. She has been brought up by an admirable gentlewoman of the Hannah More type, and a young lady has been introduced to share her lessons and keep

her from moping. In spite of the governess-chaperon's care, the heiress manages to fall in love with an artist, and even writes to ask her guardian's consent. It is indignantly refused, and when the guardian returns, before he has well arrived, his ward elopes with her lover, and sends her friend, a bright, laughter-loving girl, to represent her, so as to secure a month's quiet residence with her husband.

The interest of the play centres in Kitty, the representative of the heiress, who charms the rugged old general, exasperates yet gets the better of his severe elderly sister, and fascinates the nephew, who is yet reluctant to carry out his uncle's views. She begins by treating him as a fortune-hunter, then she falls in love with him, and at last, knowing herself to be penniless, does her best to keep him from an ardent proposal. This scene where she assures him she would never marry a poor man, and says she knows he only wanted her money, was piquante, tender, touching; and when she breaks down, unable to bear the sight of his grief and indignation, she acted with a natural abandon and passion, at the same time with grace and refinement, that astonished those who had doubted her powers. It was altogether a Robertsonian style of drama, simple, true to nature, the nature of cultured people, and absolutely free from offence.

Bellamy felt he had made a great hit, and the young *débutante* was called three times before the curtain, and

received several wreaths and bouquets from the stalls and private boxes.

Both Herbert and Trevelyan went round to the stage-door to offer their warm congratulations. Cara was very tired. Her excitement had been great, and all she wanted now was silence and darkness. She thanked both briefly. Herbert stepped up closely to assist her into the cab which waited, when he was suddenly and rudely pushed aside.

"I must speak to you too!" exclaimed a thick voice. "Do—do let me speak to you. I have lived years through that play! To hear you and see you in it is to get a glimpse of Heaven! Forgive me for thrusting myself on you, but I am dazed, and I beg your pardon, too!" turning towards Herbert. "I will say no more now, but will you take this and look at it when you get home?"

She looked up and recognised Staunton.

"Thank-you, good-night," returned Miss Fitzalan, anxious to get away.

"I'll call to-morrow to ask how you are," added Staunton, and went quickly away.

"Tell the man to drive on!" cried Mrs. Bligh, and they bowed good-night to Herbert and Trevelyan.

Cara was much too tired to open the little parcel Staunton had put into her hand that night. She thought the echoes of the applause she had received would have kept her awake, but she soon lost consciousness, and only opened her eyes when old Marie entered the room.

"Awake, mademoiselle? Madame says you are not to get up. I will bring you some breakfast!"

"Oh no, Marie. I am quite rested—quite able to get up. Tell Mrs. Bligh I shall be ready in half-an-hour."

When dressed Cara went to Mrs. Bligh's room, for that lady habitually breakfasted in bed.

"Good-morning, child," she exclaimed, the moment Cara appeared. "My congratulations. You did remarkably well last night. Of course, you are still unfinished, but I think you'll do. I begin also to hope I may see my money again."

"So do I," cried Cara joyously, "and that is the chief reason why I am so delighted to have pleased the people last night. No, that is not quite true; applause is so delicious, so intoxicating, that I could think of nothing else."

"Ah! that it is. Don't I know! I am proud of myself, Carry, because I perceived the actress under the quiet, silent little maid, who seemed so occupied with her work. That scene with your lover was really good. Nothing brings down the house so much as an apparently irresistible burst of emotion, only you must keep yourself well in hand."

"I fear I shall find that difficult. Last night when I was trying to persuade Jim not to love me, I forgot he was Mr. Merton. I felt as if it were all real, and I was so terribly sorry for him that I could hardly keep back my tears."

"I wonder if that is best?" said Mrs. Bligh, as if to

herself. "Well, I must get up; we'll have to write notes. Look here!" pointing to a pile of letters, "these are invitations and circulars, sort of things that generally come to a *débutante*, even before she shows what she is made of. You'll get a heap more. Bellamy is greatly pleased —in fact, you have made a hit. Now, if you keep your head and your heart you'll do, but, for Heaven's sake, don't fall in love! Keep the main chance before your eyes. Love burns itself to ashes—very poisonous ashes. Popularity and success fade away often before youth itself disappears. Nothing lasts like solid gold."

"And that cannot buy what is really essential," returned Cara, smiling.

"Don't be sentimental, child. By the way, what did that Kaffir of yours give you last night?"

"I do not know; I have not opened the packet."

"Bring it down with you; I shall get up now."

The dining-room was pervaded with the perfume of the flowers thrown to Cara the night before, and as she contemplated them she remembered that a certain wreath had been bestowed by Herbert, but that Trevelyan had made her no floral offering.

"He has seen so much. I suppose I seem rather commonplace to him. I wonder what he did think. When he comes I will ask him. He is very honest. I do hope he will come soon. I wish I cold talk to him by myself, I could ask him many things. What beautiful speeches Captain Herbert will make when *he* comes."

Mrs. Bligh did not appear till luncheon-time, and having discussed that meal (which was really early dinner) with much satisfaction—for Marie surpassed herself—she again asked for Staunton's parcel. Cara produced it, and Mrs. Bligh carefully unfastened the paper n which it was enveloped, and came to a morocco ase.

"As I expected," she exclaimed, "jewels!"

She pressed the spring, and beheld a gorgeous bracelet et with three large sapphires on a ground of diamonds.

"Humph!" said Mrs. Bligh, contemplating it critially. "That's worth £50; daresay he paid £70 for it."

Inside was a card, whereon the words: "Deign to ear this.—J. STAUNTON," were scrawled.

"What a quantity of money!" cried Cara, looking at ıe bracelet without touching it. "I wish he had not ffered it, for I shall certainly not take it!"

"Then you are rather a fool. Successful actresses et a good deal of this sort of plunder; and if you ccept some and refuse others you will make yourself nemies, and get the credit of having a favoured lover."

"How largely stage life seems mixed with lovers!" xclaimed Cara.

"Yes, of course. Where women are so prominent ıey play a large part. But what shall you do about ıis?" holding up the bracelet. "It is valuable, and the esign is good."

"I must return it; I could not accept it."

"Then be very judicious how you do it. A little

might turn that queer subject from a fond lover to a bitter foe."

"Trust me. I shall simply tell him that I shall not take jewels from anyone."

"Then how shall you manage?"

"Oh, I shall keep my resolution. I do not care much for jewels; I love lace better."

"You'll get yourself into a scrape and lose what might be valuable. Do not be obstinate."

"You must let me have my own way in this, dear Mrs. Bligh."

"I have no doubt you will take it."

The result of the discussion was that when Staunton called to enquire for Miss Fitzalan he was invited to walk upstairs to his great surprise and delight. He found both ladies, for Mrs. Bligh promised faithfully not to leave Cara alone with her strange, half-civilised admirer. At first Staunton was greatly embarrassed. Cara, opening the case, expressed her admiration of the bracelet.

"It is quite too costly a token of your approval, Mr. Staunton," she said kindly. "I must ask you to take it back."

"No, no, that I won't! Why, I have been hunting for something good enough for months. No, you will not be so—so unfriendly as to refuse it."

"I should not do so, Mr. Staunton, only I have made a resolution to accept no present of value from anyone, unless, indeed, from Mrs. Bligh, or some woman friend. A line of approbation, flowers, or photographs, I will

most gratefully accept, but jewels, costly ornaments, no. I am sure it is wiser not to take them; so you will not think me ungracious or ungrateful, I hope?"

Staunton looked greatly disappointed and crestfallen.

"No, of course I do not. I will not trouble you any more just now, but some day I hope you will take something from me, or condescend to ask me for something —anything you would like to have. You will forgive me, Miss Fitzalan, if I feel and think as if you were my old playfellow come back to me. It's the most extraordinary likeness. You really were burnt! There's no mistake?—Why, I am talking like a madman."

"No, indeed, I never was burnt," said Miss Fitzalan, smiling indulgently. "You must try to put this curious idea out of your head."

"I would rather keep it there," said Staunton.

"Come, I will be brutally frank," exclaimed Mrs. Leigh, "for I must send you away;" for it was almost time to go down to the theatre.

CHAPTER XVI.

TREVELYAN sat writing diligently. He was doing a piece of dry work to order; nevertheless, it interested him. His imagination could always present him with vivid pictures of what he wished, or anticipated, or attempted, to create, but this "search-light" was projected by a solid machinery of commonsense and experience which kept him within the limits of possibility, and enabled him to enjoy the flavour of facts.

At times, however, he paused, the pen between his fingers, yielding to the overpowering inclination to close his eyes and see over again the face and figure of Miss Fitzalan. He was proud of his own strength and prudence in resisting the temptation to call and discuss the play with her, or repeat his visit to the theatre. The effect she produced upon him was unaccountably vivid. Her voice had a wonderful charm for him; her simplicity and youthfulness touched his heart. He realised her loneliness and defencelessness; but since he had seen her act in that love-scene a curious glow, a subtle electric flame began to quiver through his veins whenever her image flitted across his mental field of vision. How deliciously, how tenderly, she could love! How lovely she could make life—at all events for a time!

: was rather ashamed of these thoughts. It was con-
nptibly weak to give way to them. She was so sweet,
frank, he would not think of her for a moment save
th sincere respect. Yet to make her his wife was
possible. He was much too poor to dream of matri-
ony, a holy state which did not attract him; and the
t woman he should wish to marry was an actress.
t that he doubted that among actresses plenty ex-
lent women were to be found; but he hated the
ole thing with something of the haughty exclusive-
ss which once characterised him. Men were all right
on the stage, but he somehow did not like it for
men, at anyrate, his own women. No, he would be
ided by reason, and avoid the little syren who at-
cted him, especially as he felt that, though probably
: was unaware of it herself, she was in strong sym-
thy with him. He had hardly arrived at this sen-
le resolution when Captain Herbert walked in un-
emoniously.

"If my interruption is very objectionable, Trev., tell
: to 'get up.'"

"No, you can stay. I have done enough, for my
ention is beginning to wander. What is it?"

"Nothing very particular. I am now a gentleman
large, which I do not exactly like. I miss the regi-
nt awfully, and now, as my uncle has paid my debts,
thinks he has, he considers I'm bound to act nurse.
is not an enlivening occupation. He is infernally
tankerous, but I must not say strait-laced. Now he

wants to marry me to Lady Sarah Chillingham; she has a big fortune, you know. I don't object to that; but do you know her?"

"No, I don't go much into society."

"If you did, you would agree with me that she must have been born on an iceberg and educated in a refrigerator. It's particularly hard, because, just at present, I'm all *a-glowing* and a-blowing in a different direction. I cannot contradict Lord Ellersdale straight out, for you know he has a lot of personal property, savings, etc., he can will away from me. Besides, when he paid up my recent debts he didn't know there was a thick substratum of old ones. The original creditors are very unreasonably jealous of the more modern sufferers, and so, Trev., my boy, as men who have been slave-raiding and diamond-stealing in South Africa generally return with plethoric pockets, will you lend me a couple of thou, that I may throw sops to the most voracious of the sharks?"

Trevelyan laughed.

"No, my dear fellow," he returned good-humouredly. "I don't possess more *pour tout potage,* and I cannot do without it."

"'Pon my soul, you are confoundedly disobliging! Look here! I'll give you fifty per cent."

"It's a tempting speculation, but I cannot afford it. I should think you could easily get what you want at that rate. Everyone knows you are heir to the Ellersdale estates though the title drops."

"Of course they do; but they also know that it is possible an heir in the male line may turn up. They say that Lord Ellersdale's next brother left a son or grandson out in India or California."

"It is highly improbable that he should put in an appearance."

"Anyhow, you will not lend me the cash?"

"No, Herbert, I am sorry I cannot."

"Well, that's settled! Perhaps you'll do me a smaller service. I hear the Hammond's Sunday evening gatherings are most amusing. You have the *entrée* of the house. Take me with you next Sunday."

"I did not intend going next Sunday."

"Oh! that's intolerable; after giving me such a face, you should at least throw me some crumb of comfort!"

"It's rather an amusing house, but I do not care to go often."

"Pooh! nonsense. You do not want to give me the chance of a chat with our charming little friend, Miss Fitzalan."

"Why should I object, and why do you want to cultivate her when you contemplate matrimony?"

"What on earth has matrimony to do with a pretty little sentimental idyll?"

"Oh, nothing."

"Don't be a dog in the manger, old boy."

"That is not my failing." A rapid flash of thought told him that he must not pose as a prig. "Well, Her-

bert, so be it. I'll chaperon you to Mrs. Hammond's on Sunday."

"All right. Come and dine with me at eight, or rather, with my uncle. Do you know the poor old boy has dragged himself up to town, and is installed in Portman Square—to look after my affairs, I believe."

"What a mark of interest and affection," exclaimed Trevelyan.

"He generally manages a few months in town," was the rejoinder. "It is desperately cold at Ellersdale in early spring. You'll dine with us, I hope. He begged me to catch you as often as I could."

"Oh! I'll come, with pleasure. Lord Ellersdale is a capital host."

. . . . . .

Mrs. Hammond's drawing-rooms were fuller than usual when Miss Delamere, with Staunton in attendance, entered. He had been rather a tax upon her since Cara's *début*, and she began to reflect how she could turn him to account and dismiss him, especially as her manager talked of discontinuing *The Queen's Vengeance* in London and taking it on tour. She was vaguely uneasy and infinitely surprised, not to say indignant, at Miss Fitzalan's success. This feeling was sharpened by Staunton's report that his bracelet had been rejected. She had suggested that it might be given into her safe keeping; but Staunton very coolly informed her that he intended to keep it himself.

"What airs to give herself!" she exclaimed viciously:

'and only the other day she was but a little maid-of-all-
vork who might be sent to scrub the floor!"

"She would have done it very well, too," returned
taunton stolidly.

Miss Delamere felt there was little use bombarding
arthworks, and so recovered herself, and proceeded to
ive him sage advice as to how he could best advertise
imself. He ought to give Sunday dinners, and, later on,
ntertainments at Richmond and riverside localities. Then
he would see that proper notice was given in the society
apers, aud that would show Miss Fitzalan and her
inflint of a chaperon the importance of a moneyed
an.

"That won't do me much good with her," muttered
aunton as if to himself.

"Do you mean that girl? Yes, to be sure it will.
hy, it will show her how true, how sincere, you are!
u could marry anyone, and choose a nobody like her,
thout a penny to bless herself with!"

Firmly convinced that, although she sometimes rub-
d him the wrong way, Miss Delamere was an admir-
le counsellor, Staunton promised to be guided by her,
d he duly called in a brougham to convey her to Mrs.
mmond's reception.

Trevelyan and Herbert arrived soon after.

"This is a capital house," said the latter, "and the
orations in good taste. I say, Trev., what an 'admir-
circle' has gathered round our demure little friend!
is as simply dressed as a Quakeress, but, by Jove!

she has a distinguished air in that cloudy, soft black garment. Come along, we must not be outsiders."

As Herbert remarked, there was quite a little crowd round Miss Fitzalan; but she was evidently composed and at ease. At this she was herself surprised. The fact of her stage success gave her self-reliance, and this is always confirmed by freedom from self-consciousness. Herbert soon contrived to take his place beside her.

"You are holding a court to-night!" he said, with a caressing smile. "How does your head stand your sudden elevation to what is, no doubt, your proper place?"

"Thank-you, I feel very happy and comfortable"—smiling brightly on him. "Do I not see Mr. Trevelyan? Will he not come and speak to me?"

"There's the reward of modesty. I was so eager to attract your notice I pushed my way to your side. He hangs back and is asked for. Dick Trevelyan is a very cool hand! Here, Trevelyan, Miss Fitzalan is asking for you," and Herbert rather ostentatiously drew back to speak to Mrs. Bligh, who was sitting near talking with Mrs. Hammond, to whom she immediately introduced Herbert.

"I hoped you would have come and told me what you thought of 'Kitty,'" said Miss Fitzalan, holding out her hand to Trevelyan, who drew a chair beside her.

"I wished to come and congratulate you," he said, letting his eyes rest upon her with a sense of pleasure and complete satisfaction, "but I was prevented" ("by my own prudence," he added to himself). "I thoroughly

endorse the verdict of the public. Your 'Kitty' was not only delightful—she was true!"

"You make me very happy," she returned, looking frankly into his eyes. "I have partly to thank you for my success. If you had not told me to trust my own instinct I should not have had the courage to differ on some points from Mrs. Bligh. I longed to hear what you thought, and it is nearly a fortnight since you saw me."

"I saw you last Wednesday, and I saw you last night."

"Did you—did you indeed?" blushing with pleasure. 'How very good of you."

"Good to myself. You don't suppose I should go nd look at you if I did not like doing so?" The words ere blunt, but the tone in which they were spoken made nem very sweet to Cara.

"That is better still. I want you to like me."

Trevelyan smiled a little grimly.

"Have you had tea, or lemonade, or anything? That ;, I want to get you away from this crowd."

"Yes, I have had tea, but I now want lemonade, so e will go and look for it."

"Thanks," offering his arm.

"How very charming it is, the undercurrent of music ney always have here on Sunday nights. It makes it so nuch easier to talk," she said.

"Do you ever find it difficult?" asked Trevelyan.

"Well, no," laughing good-humouredly; "yet there are people who make it difficult."

"No doubt. Do you find acting exhausts you?"

"Less than it did the first few nights; but this part is a very light one. I imagine anything tragic would be much more trying."

"And you are not a giant."

"No, but I am always well."

"What an unusual admission! Here is a quiet corner inside the door of the conservatory. I'll bring you some lemonade," which he did; also another chair, and established himself beside her. "You had a crowded audience, Miss Fitzalan, last night. I noticed a Royal Highness among them."

"Yes, the Prince of——. He asked to be introduced to me—or, I suppose, desired that I should be presented to him. I was alarmed at the idea. I did not know quite how to behave, but he was just like any other gentleman. Indeed, his manners are charming. He was very complimentary—not to me only, but to all the company—and said there was such a high finish to the whole thing, it reminded him of a French play. Poor dear Mr. Bellamy was so pleased! But I did not see you, Mr. Trevelyan."

"Did you look for me?"

"No; not last night. I did before, but, not having found you, I thought you would not come again. Mr. Staunton is always there—always in the stalls. He throws me flowers; one fell on the footlights one evening, and everyone laughed. When I think of him, it makes me quite nervous. I wish he would go away."

"I am afraid he is a great nuisance."

Both were silent for a minute. Then Cara resumed if to herself: "I have read your book. I liked some t very, very much; but some seemed rather dry."

"I have no doubt it did. Are you fond of reading?"

"Yes, very fond. I hardly ever find a book that I not interest myself in. Are you going to write ther?"

"Yes, later on. I am going to dare a bold venture am going to write a novel!"

"Ah! It must indeed be a great undertaking. You : to invent your subject as well as to treat it."

"Exactly."

"Have you sisters?"

"No. Why do you ask?"

"Because it must be a help in describing women to : lived with sisters."

"One can gather a general idea of your sex even out that open sesame," returned Trevelyan demurely.

They talked on easily and pleasantly about books, ı absorbed in the other, when a deep, rough voice sed them.

"I am to say that Mrs. Bligh wishes Miss Fitzalan ome home."

Both started and looked up to see Staunton "glower- at them. Instinctively, unconsciously, Cara laid her l on Trevelyan's arm. He rose quickly, hoping to k the movement.

"Thank-you, Staunton. Pray tell Mrs. Bligh we a coming."

Staunton turned without a word, and went away, gleam of fierce anger in his deep, dark eyes.

"You are not really afraid of him?" asked Tr velyan, turning his head to look into her pale, pathet face, while he drew her arm through his.

"I am! it is perhaps foolish. But, Mr. Trevelya help me to avoid him!"

"I will do all that is possible to serve you," h whispered, pressing the hand which lay on his arm.

CHAPTER XVII.

Our young heroine was a little more frightened than ted by her own success. The number of strangers : was introduced to, the repetition of hackneyed com- nents, the evident importance she had suddenly ac- red in the eyes of managers—metropolitan and pro- cial—made her feel curiously dazed, but did not turn head. In all this adulation there was an echo of owness which her true nature did not fail to detect. : only opinion she trusted, the only praise for which heart thirsted, was Trevelyan's. Herbert amused ; his compliments and attentions were agreeable no- gs she was ready to accept, and she felt quite at ıe with him. But the one whose presence was a joy, ›se absence was a keenly felt loss, was Trevelyan. yet, however, she was absolutely unaware that she in love with him. Perhaps she was not. Perhaps, they been parted, then she might have regretted , but the wound would have healed quickly. How- :, this was not to be.

The popularity of the new play increased. It was eptable to young and old — the schoolgirl and the ldling.

"We are steadily going up," said Mrs. Bligh, looking r a pile of cards one night while they supped before

going to rest. "'Mrs. Mainwaring, Lowndes Square.' She is a regular lion-hunter. I have often heard of her. 'Lady Stanley Jones.' She is a stranger to me. 'The Viscountess Morley.' I believe she is a very fine lady indeed. She sends an invitation to a 'small and early' dance on Friday week. We will try and go there, Carry. When I began, the stage and the *salon* did not mix together. I never had these sort of invitations. Changed times, child, since the morning when you offered to serve me for food and shelter, eh? I think I have been a good friend to you."

"You have been everything to me, Mrs. Bligh," cried Cara, with moist eyes.

"Yes; I will say I had good materials to deal with. Old Bellamy must raise your salary. You fill his theatre for him eight times a week."

"The others are admirable in their parts, too, and the greatest help to me."

"Nonsense! it is all you. The whole play centres in you—your part; and, after all, £65 is little enough off your debt to me for, let me see, how many performances? Why, over a hundred. I must see how we stand. You are not an extravagant girl, I *will* say, Carry. Have some more of these scalloped oysters? Marie does them admirably. She seems to have taken to you wonderfully of late."

"It seems I am like someone she was fond of, too," said Cara, smiling, "so that has elevated me in her estimation. I only wish *she* were the only person who

was attracted to me in this way. I do dread that poor Jack Staunton, yet I am sorry for him."

"I wonder if he is as rich as he is reported to be? Here is a note from Lord Ellersdale. He is in Portman Square. He wants us to sup or dine with him any day that suits us. Yes, of course, you can only dine on Sunday. I am at his service any day. Of course, you do not want me at the theatre now. What a curious, clear, stiff, made-up, diplomatic hand he writes. It amuses me to talk to Lord Ellersdale. He knew the people I loved—I mean liked—in the old days, and he knew *me*. Ah! that was a time worth living through. I had a grander success than you, Carry, and far more brains at your age."

"That I am sure," said Cara, with entire acquiescence.

Lord Ellersdale replied to Mrs. Bligh by return, requesting her and her young friend to give him the pleasure of their company on Sunday, which was the earliest date he could fix.

"We need not show ourselves at Mrs. Hammond's that evening," said Mrs. Bligh. "I get rather tired of that monotonous crowd."

Cara did not reply. The last Sunday evening dwelt in her mind as very delightful. She had constantly recurred in memory to the profound relief at Trevelyan's promise to help her in keeping Staunton at a distance. How kind he was! He never paid her compliments; his praise was carefully stinted, but it needed no words to tell her that he understood and sympathised with her.

Then she felt over again the warm, strong pressure of his hand, and to her surprise and confusion became conscious that in her heart she longed for a repetition of the slight caress. This alarmed her. She was surely bold and unmaidenly to have such a thought. Thank God, she could keep it to herself! No one could read her heart.

By Mrs. Bligh's advice Cara put on a pretty grey demi-toilet dress, with some deep red blossoms between the folds where they crossed upon her bosom. Her rich, red-brown hair was plaited into a kind of coronet, which gave her height, and the composure natural to her, increased by the assurance of success, gave her an air of great distinction.

Lord Ellersdale had had a bad attack of his persistent rheumatism, and desired his nephew to say he would meet his fair guests at dinner. He hated to display his difficulty of movement to strange eyes.

The house in Portman Square seemed alarming to Cara. Flowers and decorations were as abundant as at Ellersdale Abbey; a sense of refined luxury pervaded the establishment. Trevelyan and Herbert were standing together on the hearth-rug when Mrs. Bligh and Miss Fitzalan were announced; both came forward to greet them. It was the first time Cara had met Trevelyan since the previous Sunday, and a vivid colour rose to her cheek at the encounter. As her eyes met Trevelyan's Herbert had taken her hand to welcome her, and he not unnaturally thought: "Sweet little soul, she cannot

conceal her emotion at meeting me," while Trevelyan asked himself: "Can that smooth-tongued, reckless fellow have made any impression upon her?"

Dinner was announced almost immediately. They found Lord Ellersdale, who looked like the pallid attenuated ghost of a man of fashion, seated at the head of the dinner-table. It was round. The room was not solid and baronial in state as at the Abbey, but light and bright, as if intended for a Temple of Comus. Instead of heavy pictures in oils the walls were adorned with pastels. Opposite to the host hung a charming portrait of a lady in the earliest prime of womanhood—large, soft, beseeching eyes, a sweet arch mouth that suggested piquante mockery, and masses of bright brown hair. It caught Cara's eye for a moment, and seemed to her more French than English.

"Welcome, my dear Mrs. Bligh," cried Lord Ellersdale courteously. "It is, indeed, good of you to sacrifice part of your holiday to a miserable, decrepit invalid like myself. And you, mademoiselle, I am charmed to see you." He looked at her piercingly. "Ah! I see that the ripening breath of public applause has given you an additional charm. Come! let us dine, and then you must tell me all about your triumphs."

Mrs. Bligh was placed beside the host, and Trevelyan at his other side. Miss Fitzalan sat opposite to him, and Herbert beside her.

"Good, my dear Lord Ellersdale!" echoed Mrs.

Bligh, taking her seat. "It is not every day I have a chance of dining with so delightful a host."

"Mrs. Bligh inspires the agreeability she enjoys," said Herbert gallantly.

So dinner proceeded very pleasantly. From time to time Lord Ellersdale looked intently at his young guest, and addressed a few words to her, and as the moments passed gave her more and more attention.

"I was a great lover of the drama once, my dear young lady, as Mrs. Bligh will tell you. I used to be an ardent admirer of hers. If this infernal rust of the bones would let me, I should enjoy seeing your creation of your new part."

"How I wish you could, for every reason," cried Miss Fitzalan impulsively. "Though you must be a formidable critic."

"Time has somewhat blunted the edge of my observation—time and disuse. Try some of this sparkling Burgundy, Mrs. Bligh, it is rather exceptional."

"And quite inspiring," she returned, setting down her glass.

Then Trevelyan mentioned some political report, and the conversation turned on public matters. Cara was a little surprised to hear how intelligently Mrs. Bligh spoke on such topics, contrasting the Mrs. Bligh of everyday, commonplace life, and the same personage *en grand toilet*, mental and physical.

Herbert kept up an undercurrent of small talk, punctuated with admiring glances, none of which escaped

Trevelyan, though he seemed quite absorbed by his argument with Lord Ellersdale on the Radical and Conservative views of diplomacy.

When the ladies left the table, and spent a few minutes looking over some Sunday papers, Lord Ellersdale was wheeled into his private sitting-room at the other side of the hall. Here the rest of the little party joined him; while Trevelyan and Herbert looked over a collection of Indian photographs, Mrs. Bligh devoted herself to her host. He gave her rather short replies at first, and seemed occupied in watching the group round the stand of photographs.

"What is her real name?" he asked suddenly, nodding towards Cara.

"I hardly know or remember," said Mrs. Bligh. "She came to me in great trouble, and I fancied myself a sentimental idiot for yielding to my fancy for her. But I must say she has turned out very well."

"Hum! That means you do not want to tell me her story. Isn't that it?"

"Ah! what a shrewd observer you are, my lord," returned Mrs. Bligh, who knew how valuable a touch of mystery was for creating an interest.

Lord Ellersdale did not press the question.

"You have done up her hair differently," he continued. "It is a great improvement. She has gentle blood in her veins, I am certain, *à la main gauche,* most probably. Ah! my dear friend, how amusing and interesting the course of human life is—its eddies and back-

waters, the little wandering streams that branch off from it, some to be lost in the sands of adversity, some to receive endless tributaries, to swell and swell till they overpass the original river in importance and volume. I am thinking of writing the history of my own family."

"It would, no doubt, be an interesting study."

"It would—as I should treat it," he returned with a cynical grin. "I should begin with our real beginning—a very small one and not too clean. Then I should dare to be Zolaesque, and depict the fortunes of those little obscure rills which swell the main river—the men that groped in the gutter, the women that cloaked the prostitute in a peeress's robe. There's a fair sprinkling of fine fellows and decent females, however. Did you notice that pastel portrait hanging opposite us as we sat at dinner?"

"I did. It is quite charming. A French lady?"

"It is a portrait of my mother," returned Lord Ellersdale in a different tone. "She died when I was about twenty. I keep her picture here. She hated the Abbey; she was unhappy there, so I keep it in town, which she loved. Yes, she was French." Then, in a lighter voice: "*You* are not, I suppose, tied to rehearsals or anything of that sort?"

"No—not at all."

"Then do me the great favour of lunching with me on Tuesday next. We have many reminiscences in common, and it does me good to air them in such good company."

"I shall be delighted, Lord Ellersdale."

"Ready compliance doubles the favour," said he gallantly, while he added mentally, "she shall tell me all that girl's history before she leaves. I'll try more sparkling Burgundy."

"Do you know, Mrs. Bligh, that an aunt of mine, Lady Dorothy Temple, is most anxious to be introduced to you and Miss Fitzalan?" said Herbert.

"My dear boy, you are surely not going to inflict that fearful female on our unsuspecting friends," cried the host.

"Mrs. Bligh will be amused, and not allow her to approach high boredom pitch!" said Herbert. "She is a survival of the fine old evangelical species, now almost extinct, who believes the play-house is the fore-court of a warmer region, while the actresses and actors are ten times more the children of hell than ourselves. She hears that Miss Fitzalan has not yet quite passed the boundary line of perdition. You would be a grand catch for her, Miss Fitzalan!"

"I presume I am too hardened a sinner," said Mrs. Bligh, smiling.

Soon after the aristocratic-looking butler was told to whistle a cab, and the lady guests said good-night.

"Will you give me a cup of tea to-morrow if I look in between four and five?"

"Yes, of course. Come before five, for Miss Fitzalan must rest before she goes to the theatre."

"I never met any man who gave me so much the

idea of knowing all the wickedness of the world, and the glory of it," said Mrs. Bligh, as they rolled homeward.

"What glory can there be in wickedness?" asked Cara.

"Full and complete knowledge of anything gives a feeling of superiority."

"Yes, but you said, and you meant, the glory of wickedness."

"Ah! well, I do not know what I meant."

The next day Trevelyan found two or three visitors at tea with Mrs. Bligh, amongst them Miss Delamere and Mr. Bellamy. He soon contrived a little talk apart with Miss Fitzalan.

"I want to tell you that I have never seen Staunton since we met at Mrs. Hammond's. I cannot think what has become of him. I called on him, but was told vaguely that he had gone out of town. Do not think I have forgotten my promise! He will not long be out of sight. Should you wish me to do anything especial, send me a line to my private address," and he laid his card on his saucer, placing cup and all on a little table in the window.

"It is so good of you to trouble yourself for me! Mr. Staunton has not appeared here either, so perhaps he has found something new."

Trevelyan shook his head.

"I doubt that," he said.

CHAPTER XVIII.

MISS DELAMERE was sitting over a very late break-ıst, with the *Times* in her hand, and a puzzled expression n her countenance. It had been called up by an announce-ıent among the deaths: —

"On the 23rd instant, at her residence, Elm Villa, Richmond, ady Lorrimer."

So Sir Ferdinand was a free man once more. How ould that affect her? How could she knit up the broken nks of the chain that once held him to her? It was me she settled herself in some solid condition. Her resent engagement would not last much longer; as it 'as, the house grew emptier every night, and the manager ad determined to withdraw the piece at the end of the ıonth. She had nothing fresh in prospect.

"It is time I got something out of Staunton," she ıought, "for all the trouble I have taken about him. ll ask him for a good big loan. Of course, he must nderstand I am not to pay it back. But he is very dense. wonder how I can find out anything about him. If—"

Her meditations were interrupted by the entrance of er maid.

"If you please, 'm, Mr. Staunton is in the drawing-oom."

"Good gracious! Is the fire lit?"

"No, 'm."

"Then you must bring him in here. Take away that dish, and put a napkin over that big grease stain. Haven't got one! Oh! you stupid! Quick, then; that bowl of flowers! Sweep up the hearth! There, that's pretty tidy! What an hour to call!" Then, after a minute or two, as Staunton came in, she exclaimed: "Law! Mr. Staunton! you are an early bird! I thought you had gone back to Africa; it's such an age since you called, and what have you been doing to yourself? You look awfully bad!"

"Doing? Oh, nothing. I am all right. I went down to look at a pretty little place near Cowes, a sort of house Miss Fitzalan would like, I fancy. I met a young fellow there who has been very civil to me—Lord Frederic Loftus. He introduced me to some of his pals."

"My dear boy! Lofty Fred is a very queer customer. I don't like him myself; he is not my sort; but I have heard it is not too safe to play cards with him."

"That's all lies! Why, he is the son of a marquis. He has plenty of money."

"They say he gets plenty of other people's money. However, I daresay you can take care of yourself."

"You bet!" said Staunton laconically.

"Well, and what have you to tell me about your special scheme?" she asked in almost affectionate tones. "Do you know, I was just thinking of you as I ate my breakfast and wondering how you were getting along. What a pity it is that Miss Fitzalan is such a shy bird.

She doesn't know what's good for her. It's not every day a girl gets such a chance! A man like you, with looks, name, none of your whipper-snappers, but a real sailor with bone and muscle, and money as could give a woman a good position."

"She doesn't care a rap for me," gloomily, "but I don't think she dislikes me as much as she used—I mean, when she was the other girl."

"You are a curious creature, Mr. Staunton, to mix up your dead sweetheart with the living one."

"I can't separate them, you see. She did speak soft and kind when she refused that bracelet. Then she was cold and hard again—well, not exactly hard—"

"You must remember there are a lot of young fellows making love to her ever since she came out."

"Ay! The last time I saw her she was in the conservatory at Hammond's with Trevelyan."

"Trevelyan!" screamed Miss Delamere.

"Trevelyan's all right. He has been a good friend to me. He knows all I want and wish, and he would not take any advantage," said Staunton slowly.

"In my opinion, Trevelyan is a beast!" cried the lady with much energy. "Don't you trust him; a cold, calculating, selfish, upsetting prig, take my word for it. He is undermining you."

"I cannot believe he would. But——"

"Well, well, I have warned you! That's my honest opinion. She is a sweet, pretty creature, but a mere baby. Trevelyan will never marry her, you may be sure, and

that hag, Mrs. Bligh, would sell her to Old Nick if he would only bid high enough."

"My God!" cried Staunton, starting up with such wild fury blazing in his eyes that Miss Delamere felt frightened.

"Do take it easy!" she exclaimed. "You look as if you could commit a murder!"

"Yes, I could—murder anyone that would injure a hair of her head! I am going—I'm not fit to speak to anyone till I've cooled down!"

"I'll not stop you, though I did want to say a word or two about myself."

"I'll call again soon," said Staunton, and left the room without shaking hands or even saying "good-morning."

"He has a tile loose, if ever a man had," thought Miss Delamere, looking after him. "As soon as I get that loan I shall steer clear of him."

Meantime, the unhappy Staunton, raging against everyone, including himself, wandered away to the Park. It was a fine spring day, but the sunshine did not illuminate the black depths of Staunton's heart. He had already experienced pangs of distrust since he had found Cara in such close conversation with Trevelyan at Mrs. Hammond's. Yet he clung almost despairingly to the faith he still had in his friend.

"I'll go and talk to him," he thought, as he paced across the Park towards Kensington. "He always speaks the truth! He is a regular swell. He wouldn't marry beneath him, as he would call marrying that angel, and I don't believe he'd think of anything else. If he did——"

His powerful, sinewy hands clenched themselves, as if at the throat of his friend. After tramping to and fro to try and cool the fever which ran riot in his veins, Staunton suddenly felt himself equal to the encounter with Trevelyan, and, hailing a hansom, drove to his lodgings. He had, however, struggled for self-mastery to no result. Trevelyan was out, and would not return, the servant said, till late. So Staunton went raging away. All he could do was to send a note to Trevelyan begging him to make an appointment for the following day.

Meantime, Mrs. Bligh had kept her promise, and unched with Lord Ellersdale on the appointed Tuesday. She returned in a very good temper, though she was quiet and thoughtful.

"He really has an admirable cook. We had an *pigramme d'agneau à la Russe* which was perfect—yes, perfect. I wish I dared ask for the recipe, but that would be *lèse Majesté.* Lord Ellersdale is greatly interested n you, Carry. You must go and have tea with him one fternoon. He was quite confidential about his arrangenents for marrying his heir to Lady Sarah Chillington. She is the only daughter of Lord Snowdon. She takes ll the provision for younger children. I fancy our Prince Charming does not like to give up his liberty, but, as Lord Ellersdale said with a cynical smile: 'There is no eason why an arranged marriage of that description hould interfere with the pleasures of life.' He is, or sed to be, a most agreeable sinner, and a hard one nto the bargain. The only woman he ever really cared

for in the sense of affection was his mother. She must have been very lovable, from what he tells me. By the way, you have no fancy for Captain Herbert?"

"Me!" exclaimed Cara, opening her eyes in frank amazement. "Can *you* fancy such a piece of folly?"

Mrs. Bligh laughed.

"Many women would find him fascinating, but, thank Heaven, you are not given to such fancies! In spite of your artistic temperament, Carry, I rather think the sober domesticity of matrimonial affection would suit you better than the summer lightning of free love. I never cared for chains myself."

"I am sure I should prefer the security of the fold to the desolate freedom of the wilderness."

"Well, whatever you do, don't give up your freedom till you have paid me and put by a nest-egg for yourself."

"That will be a long time, Mrs. Bligh, at the rate I am paid."

"Your pay shall be doubled before three months are over," said Mrs. Bligh firmly. "Then you must star it in the autumn."

"I think I must have a holiday."

"I suppose so."

She said it reluctantly, then, hearing a step on the landing outside the door, she called vigorously: "Marie! Marie!"

"Madame?" returned Marie, putting in her head.

"Marie! that unconscionable man Hackett has charged *two* pounds of steak! Now, you know it was only one

and a half: we weighed it together on Saturday. Have you kept the ticket?"

"I must have put it on the file, madame, but I will go and see."

"Mind you come back at once."

In a few minutes Marie reappeared.

"I cannot comprehend it, madame, but the ticket is not there. The girl must have thrown it away."

"*I* can 'comprehend,' Marie. You were in a bad temper and threw it behind the fire!"

"Madame does me cruel injustice. *Tenez,* do I ever disregard the interests of madame?"

"Yes, you do. That miserable, filthy scrap of paper represented eightpence half-penny! Give me his book! I will not be ruined without an effort to save myself, even though I deprive *you* of your retaining fee! I'll go round to Hackett myself."

"My fee! *Grand Dieu,* madame! How can you insult a faithful servant so—so shamefully! I haven't the book. Those *sacré* books go back on Monday."

"And you let it go back without insisting on rectifying that scandalous mistake! Give me my gloves, Carry; I will settle Mr. Hackett!"

Mrs. Bligh whisked out of the room.

Marie lifted up hands and eyes.

"It is too bad, mademoiselle. Madame is too severe. I will go where I shall be more appreciated. Madame is too bad. Ay! she what you call skin a flint for a farding, and spoil a tuppenny knife! That is not true eco-

nomy. I have thought madame not so much screwy since mademoiselle was with us, but this is too—too shameful!"

She drew forth a handkerchief and pressed it to her eyes.

"Never mind, Marie; madame is hasty, but she knows your value."

"I wish, then, she would show the knowledge. I am sure *you,* mademoiselle, have enough to put up with. 'Tis our misfortune. We must have faith and resignation in this life of trouble. *Tiens!* I will make you a *sole au plat* to-day which would soothe the malignity of what you call him?—Ol' Nick! Ah, she shall see *all* my value; that will be a noble revenge!"

With the air of a martyr Marie left the room.

Trevelyan at this period frequently cursed his luck for having linked him with so troublesome and inconvenient a follower as Staunton. He was not without sympathy with this queer plaything of fortune. Though by no means without good points, there were fundamental weaknesses in the man that made it very doubtful how he would turn out—a fine, generous, commonsensical fellow, or a fierce, bullying blackguard. His passion for Miss Fitzalan was a terrible aggravation of the dark side. It was impossible that such a girl could give him anything beyond pity, not untinged with disgust. He seemed so convinced that persistence was all he needed to conquer, to gain the prize for which he thirsted, that Trevelyan feared the result of awakening him to the truth.

He had replied to Staunton's note by appointing the

ıext morning for his visit, but no visitor came, nor the ıext day either. It was not till the third day, when Trevelyan came in from interviewing his editor, and tramp-ng about the City, that he was informed that a gentleman, Ir. Staunton, was waiting for him.

"Hullo, Staunton! Better late than never! What ıecame of you?"

"Oh, I was very much engaged. I hope it was no ıconvenience to you my breaking my appointment?"

"No, not at all. I have not yet reached that pro-ıinent position when men fight for a few minutes' talk ·ith me. Now, what's the matter? I say, Staunton, I'm fraid you've been drinking. It's a pity after keeping :raight so——"

"What's that to you?" interrupting savagely. "You re not my keeper!"

"Very true; but as you used to look on me as a ·iend, I thought it only friendly to tell you what I no-ced."

Staunton kept a sullen silence for a second or two, ıen he burst out: "Yes, I've been drinking pretty hard ęsterday and the day before. I found drinking better ıan thinking."

"What's gone wrong?"

"She has turned against me."

"Miss Fitzalan? What have you done to offend her?"

"Nothing—on my soul, nothing! She was as nice ıd kind when I offered her that bracelet. Someone as set her against me. I went to speak to her at the

stage door two nights ago. That fine gentleman, Herbert, was handing her into the cab. When I came up she started and shrank away as if she had been stung."

"She *was* startled, no doubt. You are a little abrupt."

"Well, I have found out the mischief-maker."

"Indeed! Who is it?"

"Yourself!" hissed Staunton, starting up and beginning to pace to and fro.

A quick flush passed over Trevelyan's brow.

"I am no man's rival," he said coldly. "I cannot think of marriage."

"No one thinks of marriage save myself," exclaimed Staunton. "I ask nothing better than to devote myself and all I possess to my precious sweetheart, who has come back to me from the cruel flames almost the same as she was. But when I hear other fellows talk about the women of her profession—about women of all kinds—it makes my blood boil. And to think that you—*you* whom I thought my best friend, whom I trusted as something far above and better than myself—put yourself between me and the one creature I live for and hope for!"

"You are wrong, Staunton, utterly wrong. I do not think—I never did think—of Miss Fitzalan as anything but an agreeable acquaintance, and she is absolutely indifferent to me. Remember, that I believe she would be a charming and estimable wife to any man; but I dare not think of such a commodity," laughing. "My good fellow, I can hardly keep myself. Besides, I am not so conceited as to suppose I should be acceptable to Miss

Fitzalan. She looks on me as a blunt but well-meaning elderly buffer, and never gives me a thought."

"That is not true!" cried Staunton. "She clung to you at Mrs. Hammond's when I came suddenly upon you, as I would give ten years of my life to feel her cling to me. But I am willing to believe you, Mr. Trevelyan. I'd be all at sea if I didn't. Yet, in spite of you, and her, and the whole world, I'll have her for my wife, see if I won't!"

"If you are really devoted to this lady you ought to desire, before everything else, her happiness, and reflect if marriage with you would promote it."

Staunton's reply was a thundering oath, as he swung out of the room.

That evening, as Cara prepared to leave for the theatre, she received a letter. The writing was unknown to her. It was neat, clear, and businesslike, and ran thus:—

"Mrs. Harding presents her compliments to Miss Fitzalan, and hopes she will pardon her for asking leave to call on Miss Fitzalan at any suitable time. Mrs. Harding wishes to ask for a little information."

This bore the address of Eastbourne Terrace, W.

"What shall I say to that?" asked Cara, handing the note to Mrs. Bligh.

"Oh, I should receive her. It is some lion-hunting woman, and the sooner you get clear of her the better. Tell her to come on Thursday at four. I am going to a sale at Grant & Gask's, and you may have your adorer all to yourself."

"How do you know she is an adorer?"

Thursday came, dry and cold. Mrs. Bligh had gone off to her sale, and tea was set forth prettily, when, a few minutes after four, Mrs. Harding was announced, and enter a plump and extremely well-dressed woman with laughing, dark eyes and a bright colour. Cara started up, hesitated a moment, then ran forward with outstretched hands, exclaiming: "Susan! Susan Mayfield!"

CHAPTER XIX.

CARA was surprised at her own pleasure in recognis-ng her former school-friend. Whatever of brightness re-eved her old dreary life was associated with her sunny, onest, kindly companion, Susan Mayfield, and she threw er arms round her in warmest welcome.

"Oh Susan, I *am* glad to see you again!"

"Then you *are* Cara!" cried Susan, kissing her. "I ever was so amazed as when I saw you last night at ıe Regent's Theatre. I was a bit scared, too! I was ı sure you were dead. All through the play I was de-ıting if it could be you. There is a way you have of ıaking your head slightly, and smiling when you con-adict anyone, which made me sure it was you, when her things were quite different. I was so troubled that y husband advised me to write and ask leave to come ıd see you."

"Your husband? Then you are no longer a governess? ɔme and sit down, I am quite alone, and we can have nice long talk."

"I'm that dazed," exclaimed Susan, "I do not know here to begin." She looked sharply at the rich furni-.re and handsome ornaments, and asked a little anx-usly: "Are you, too, married, Cara?"

"No," smiling. "None of these fine things are mine.

They belong to the lady I live with, who used to be a great actress, and has taught me all I know."

"You have been in luck. Oh! I am so glad. Tell me—tell me everything. How did you escape? I never heard of your death—I mean the fire—till we were in Sydney. Then mother wrote and told me how your stepmother had gone to see her in a crazy condition, quite beside herself with grief about the whole thing; all the poor girls being burnt as well as you. How did you escape?"

Whereupon Cara began at the beginning, and told all her experiences since they parted. Susan listened with keen interest and many ejaculations of wonder and admiration.

"And now you are a real lady, and admired, and your picture in all the photograph-shops, and all sorts of things."

"I do not think that is any great mark of distinction, Susan. You know there are actresses and actresses. A great many are excellent and charming; some are—well, not quite the same. Everything used to be against us; now society is inclined to pet us and make much of us!"

"And are you going to acknowledge me, Cara?"

"Of course I am. Why should I not be delighted to see an old friend from Australia? But, Susan, beyond saying that we were schoolfellows, I do not want you to say anything about my life, simply because nothing has been said about it, and I wish it to be left in oblivion, chiefly because——" and she proceeded to describe the

reappearance of Jack Staunton and his curious ideas about herself. "I don't think you ever saw him, Susan?"

"No, never!" emphatically.

"That is fortunate, for I am most anxious he should not know that I am Cara Leigh. You will not betray me then, Susan?"

"Me! Wild horses wouldn't drag anything out of me. But there's my husband; he knows so much already; he must know all, but he is as close as wax."

"Tell me about him, Susan."

"He is just the dearest old boy in the world! He's a good bit older than I am, grey-haired, and a trifle too stout; but his heart is young and warm, and he can ride the worst buck-jumpers in the district. We met at the house of some friends of Mr.——, away in the bush, and, somehow, he took a fancy to me. He had a big cattle-station. He is not very rich, but comfortable, and we hope to make money enough to come home and live quietly in England after the burden and heat of the day. And, Oh Cara, you should see mother! She is that proud of me and Mr. Harding, that's my husband, that my sister is nowhere!"

The minutes flew past as they talked over the years that intervened between the present and the past. The bitterness of her early days came back with increased poignancy to Cara, who, in the sunshine of the present, had ceased to think of them.

"Can you come and dine with us on Sunday?" asked Susan. "You do not act on Sunday. Mr. Harding will be so pleased! You can't think how he admired you as

'Kitty.' I was tempted to be jealous. I suppose you have lots of admirers, eh, Cara?"

"Oh yes," she returned laughing. "You know it is the correct thing for men about town be in love, or pretend to be in love, with a popular actress; but the only one I think of is Jack Staunton, and I am dreadfully afraid of him. I am sure he is capable of murdering me if I try to keep him at a distance. He may not be mad now, but he will be one day."

"You exaggerate, dear. You were always fanciful about him!"

Cara shook her head.

"The only thing I want you to keep back from Mr. Harding, from your husband, is that Jack Staunton knew me before."

"All right, dear; but I daresay everything will come out some time or other—everything always does."

Presently Mrs. Bligh returned, and looked not a little surprised to find Cara in earnest conversation with a total stranger. Fortunately, she came back in a very good humour. She had bought a pile of bargains—all just what she most wanted—and she was quite interested in explaining to Mrs. Harding the advantages of the remarkable sale she had just attended.

"Mrs. Harding has asked me to dine with her on Sunday, Mrs. Bligh, and I should like to have an opportunity of making Mr. Harding's acquaintance."

"Very nice and kind, I am sure; but I am afraid you cannot go, Carry. I have asked Mr. Bellamy to

dine with us on Sunday; he wants to show us a play that has been offered to him which has a part that might suit you. We must have something in reserve, you know. It's by a friend of ours."

"Of course, if it is a question of business," said Susan, "I should not dream of interfering."

"Suppose you and Mr. Harding come to us on Sunday evening," said Mrs. Bligh graciously. "We expect a few friends about ten o'clock."

Mrs. Harding accepted readily enough, and took leave of her old acquaintance very effusively.

"She is quite a presentable person," said Mrs. Bligh, when Susan had left the room. "It will do you no harm to acknowledge her. Whom has she married? A bushranger of some description? They are often very rich. À *propos* of money, I met old Farnborough in the Strand last now. He tells me he is making a collection of miniatures to exhibit, and probably sell. He'll get immense prices for them. He will call the exhibition a 'century of miniatures.' I wish you would let me show him those portraits of your father and mother. No, no! Of course, you would not sell them; but you might ascertain what they are really worth. It is always well to know the true value of one's belongings."

"I really do not care to know, Mrs. Bligh. Nothing can increase the value they possess for me; and even hunger would not induce me to part with them."

"That may be; but I unfortunately mentioned them to Farnborough, and he is anxious to see them; so you

must trust them to me, dear. I shall take the greatest care of them; and will not let them out of my sight, nay, out of my hands."

"Well, Mrs. Bligh, if you make a point of it, you shall have them, but I do not think they are of any value in themselves. They cannot be more than twenty-five or thirty years old; and I do not know the name of the painter."

"Oh, Farnborough will tell you all that. I will take the greatest care of them. I promised to go down to see him to-morrow."

That night after the play, Mrs. Bligh and her *protégée* went to a dance at Lady Middleton's, who piqued herself on the universality of her gatherings. The rooms were very full, and as they ascended the stairs Cara saw Trevelyan, whose head was generally visible above the crowd. He seemed looking out for someone or something. He smiled and bowed on meeting her eye, and immediately began to thread his way towards her.

As soon as Mrs. Bligh had exchanged a few words with the hostess, she looked for a seat, as she found standing was extremely fatiguing. Here a well-known specimen of "the elderly man about town" joined her, and they were soon deep in gossip and political *canards.*

"I will not ask you to dance," said Trevelyan, "because I do not know how. Nor would you find it possible, the rooms are so crowded. Let me guide you to a quiet nook before the gilded youth of the evening are aware of your presence. I want to speak to you."

"Very well," she returned, looking at him with sweet, happy eyes, that sent a delicious thrill along those lightning-conductors, the veins, from which he resolved to take warning.

The nook was a fernery, with some miniature rocks and a fountain, which opened from a morning-room, where card-tables were set. The coolness and quiet were refreshing, for the April of that year was unusually summer-like and warm.

"Is it not an effort to come on here after the fatigue of acting?" asked Trevelyan, glancing at the slight, pliant form, as he seated himself beside her with a feeling of tender compassion.

"No; I feel less fatigued than I used. Acting excites me less. I think I should enjoy another play now."

"I suppose the constant repetition is tiresome. I thought you never did that scene better than last night."

"Last night! Were you in the theatre?" exclaimed Cara, the colour stealing softly over her cheek, and a smile quivering at the corners of her mouth.

"Yes; I often look in, unless I am very busy. My 'evenings at home' are somewhat dreary. But I want to speak to you of Staunton. He came to confide his troubles to me the other day, and seemed in a crazy state. I hope you will not be vexed with me for the advice I gave him. It was to try his chance—to ask you to be his wife, and settle the matter. You see, as long as nothing distinct is said or done, you can hardly shake him off. When you have refused him, why then,

the thing is finished, and you can close your doors against him."

"I suppose you are right," said Cara reluctantly. "But I dread it—I cannot tell you how much;" and he noticed that the hand which clasped and unclasped the fan she held trembled. "But will it relieve me from this persecution?"

"I should think so. If not, there is but one other resource that I can think of."

"And what is that?"

"Put the rampart of matrimony between you and him. Give some lucky fellow the right to be your companion, your protector. You have, no doubt, an ample choice!"

"Ah! Mr. Trevelyan," with delicious archness, "the remedy is as bad as the disease."

"But you may find a possible remedy some day. You do not incline to celibacy."

"Oh no, not always. I have a high opinon of your wisdom, Mr. Trevelyan, but you have set me a cruel task."

"Believe me, it is the best course to pursue. Meantime, I have advised him to go down to Newborough to look after his yacht, which was laid up for the winter. This will give you a breathing-space."

"And perhaps he will go away on a cruise and forget, and stay away."

Trevelyan shook his head.

"I fear I cannot encourage that hope. It is most

unlikely that he should. Now, tell me, is there any probability of Bellamy putting on a new play?"

"There is some talk of it, but not till the winter. However, I am to have a holiday next month, only for a fortnight, but it will be a delightful rest."

"Where do you think of going?"

"I am not sure. I want to go to the seaside. The sea has so much fascination."

"Were you accustomed to the sea in your childhood?"

"Oh no, only to the dull, dusty streets of London."

"You do not give me the idea of a Londoner."

"Of what, then, do I give you an idea?" laughing.

"Of an early violet lurking under its leaves, which betrays its presence by its infinite sweetness," said Trevelyan in a low tone.

The words were uttered before he could restrain them; but at least he kept his eyes fixed on the tessellated pavement of the fernery. Cara's heart beat wildly for a moment, and her cheek paled with the strange emotion his words stirred.

"That is the most charming compliment I have ever had," she said, smiling, though her voice was rather unsteady. "I would fain believe it, or believe that *you* believe it."

"A compliment," began Trevelyan hastily, when a familiar voice exclaimed:

"Oh, you are here, are you? A most effective hiding-place." Looking up they saw Captain Herbert with a slight frown on his pleasant face. "I have been hunt-

ing everywhere for you, Miss Fitzalan. The majo are devouring. The ballroom is comparatively cl and the music is good. Indulge me with a dance. am certain you are an ideal partner. Don't waste y sweetness on Trevelyan; he cannot dance a bit. Co pray do not let us lose time."

Anxious to avert attention from the nervousness thought was visible, Cara rose at once and took H bert's arm.

"I will take charge of your fan, and deliver it Mrs. Bligh," said Trevelyan, taking it; "and so I you very heartily farewell. I am, you know, 'a slave the lamp,' and must go home and work." He bow and left them.

"Mr. Trevelyan is very clever, is he not?" said C

"Yes, tremendously. They always send a fire-eng with him when he walks along the embankment."

"A fire-engine? Why?"

"You see, it would be embarrassing to have Thames on fire!"

"Ah, yes, of course," and she laughed.

"His cleverness does not enliven him, however. seems chiefly in brown or blue studies of late. Yet does fairly well, and would be rather a favourite if would allow people to pet him. But he is too much earnest. He was twice as lively when he came b from Africa. He is a sort of relation of mine. people are Cornish, so are the Trevelyans."

He slid his arm round her, and they glided into a delightful waltz.

Cara returned later than usual from Lady Middleton's ball (generally Mrs. Bligh was extremely strict on this point), but she did not feel tired; an unusual sense of joyous satisfaction buoyed her up. She told herself it was because she had heard that Staunton was safe out of the way; but the echo of Trevelyan's voice, the words that had escaped his lips, dwelt on her ear, and filled her heart with unspeakable sweetness. Could it be possible that he loved her, or had begun to love her? She had a vague impression that he disliked the calling of an actress—at least for her. Was this the jealousy of affection? Yet how unlikely that she should attract the affection of a man so far her superior? She must not allow herself to think of such a possibility. Besides, were he even a prince of the blood, she would shrink from giving him her love unasked.

The season was now approaching its zenith, and June was at hand. Invitations continued to pour in on Miss Fitzalan and her chaperon, whose early errors, or error, which had been of a quiet and decorous nature, was forgotten by the older members of society, and unknown to the younger. Still, Cara was not giddy with her success, but she was beginning to feel physically weary.

Her hopes of safety from the presence of Staunton were, however, of short duration. At this time her most quietly happy moments were spent with her faithful friend, Mrs. Harding, who thoroughly enjoyed Cara's

progress upward and onward. Mrs. Bligh did not approve the intimacy. It seemed somehow to interfere with her influence, though she was obliged to confess that Susan had kept the secret of Cara's history faithfully.

"Here, child," said Mrs. Bligh one morning, a few days after Lady Middleton's entertainment. "Here are your miniatures. You were right, they are not of much value. It seems the painting is somewhat inferior, and the artist unknown."

"They are very precious to me," returned Cara, taking them. "My mother looks very sweet and refined. Does it not seem amazing that, after living with such a companion, my father could marry such a creature as his second wife?"

"Not to me. When you have lived as long as I have, you will never be surprised at anything a man does. By-the-bye, I have promised poor Lord Ellersdale that you will come and lunch with him on Thursday."

"You are coming too, are you not, Mrs. Bligh?"

"Yes, I know you would wish it; but you needn't be afraid of our noble friend. He seems interested in you, and he may be—well—useful to you."

"He is very kind to trouble about me."

"Are you going out?"

"Yes, I am going to shop with Susan."

"Oh, don't over-fatigue yourself. I am going out, too. I am going into the City; do not wait tea for me."

It was a fine, warm day, and Cara was glad to put

on a lilac muslin tea-gown on her return from an hour or two spent at Marshall & Snelgrove's, and refresh herself with a fresh and fragrant cup of tea. She was a little vexed to find Trevelyan's card on her return. But he would call again; he often did, though she rarely saw him alone.

She had finished her tea, and was reading in one of the new magazines an article on the present state of the drama, when Marie threw the door open and announced "Mr. Staunton."

Cara grew white as she rose to receive him, feeling enraged at her own thoughtlessness for omitting to say "not at home."

"How do you do?" said Staunton, advancing into the middle of the room, and stopping there, not attempting to offer his hand.

"Quite well, thank-you. I am sorry to say Mrs. Leigh is out."

"Yes, I know."

An awkward pause.

"May I offer you a cup of tea?"

"Thank-you, no. I do not take tea."

Another pause.

"When did you return to town?" asked Cara, in despair about finding something to say. "Mr. Trevelyan told me you had gone away to see about your yacht."

"I did, and found her all right. I have got a crew for her, and have taken her round to Southampton. She is a regular beauty! I wish you could see her."

"It must be very interesting to sail her yourself."

"Yes, that's it. I would rather be a sailor than anything else; and to sail one's own ship, that's best of all."

A pause.

"Has Trevelyan been here lately?" asked Staunton in a staccato style.

"He was here to-day, but I was out."

"I am glad of it! Yes, I am!" in reply to her astonished look.

"I thought you were great friends with Mr. Trevelyan?"

"Yes, and in a way I am, only I hate him when he comes between you and me."

"How can that possibly be?" she asked coldly.

"I can hardly tell, only I feel it. Listen to me, Miss Fitzalan. I suppose you know—you must know—that you—you are all the world to me? I care for nothing else. If I didn't hope to call you wife one day I wouldn't—I couldn't live. Look now, I am not penniless. I can settle enough on you to keep you comfortable all the days of your life, and I will. You know—that is—I've told you that my first sweetheart's unkindness drove me into evil ways. Then she was taken from me. Now, God seems to have sent you to me in her place, and you I will have. Now Trevelyan comes between us; but don't you heed him. I have talked to him, and he told me he didn't want to marry you or anyone. He is too poor, he says. He is a regular swell, you know, and wants a lot of money. It would

take a lot of love to make him marry anyone who hadn't blue blood, so he just stifles his liking for you. Then there's Capain Herbert. He would never put a ring on your finger. Now I would, and be proud and happy if you'd only take my name. O my darling! if you would deign to have me, I should feel like a king! I—I could do anything; and of all the fellows who seem wild about you I am the only one in earnest. Hear me——"

"No, Mr. Staunton, no! It is impossible, it is useless!" interrupted Cara, frightened, offended, wounded. "I think you are generous, true, well-disposed. There are many women who might be very happy with you, and love you well, but I cannot. I do not wish to marry, I only want to follow my career. I am so sorry to vex you, to disappoint you, but I cannot help it. Do forgive me and put me out of your mind, for indeed I can never love you. You distress—you frighten me."

"I cannot put you out of my head, and I won't try; but I don't want to frighten you. I can wait. I'll not hurry you, though my life is a martyrdom. I'll not offend you. I'll give you time."

He had started up and was pacing the room.

"But I will *not* give you up. No one loves you as I do; and by all that's sacred or infernal, good or bad, I'll call you my own yet!"

With these words he flung out of the room, leaving Cara quivering with indignation and alarm.

CHAPTER XX.

THIS interview with Staunton shook Cara's nerves terribly. It was not her mingled feelings of fear and compassion for the unhappy man that affected her most, it was the revelation of Trevelyan's views and intentions. Had she then given her heart away unasked? Had she betrayed her weakness to a man who did not want her?

She was now feverishly determined to guard her looks, her speech, her gestures, and present an appearance of frank friendliness, absolutely divested of sentiment. The change was delicate, and, to outside observers, quite imperceptible; but Trevelyan was keenly alive to the alteration of tone, and greatly puzzled to account for it. She had been so inexpressibly charming at Lady Middleton's party; and never again had she shown that touch of sweet shrinking that sent the wildfire of passion shivering through him from head to heel. Could Captain Herbert's fascinations have pushed him from the place he had almost gained? Yet, had he any right to regret this? How dared he think of matrimony, anyhow? Herbert certainly did not intend to enter that holy state with a penniless actress. Would it not be better for Miss Fitzalan to face the strain of a long engagement with a poor man like himself than risk breaking her heart about a fellow for whom she had no fence of holiness?

"Had it come to this?" he thought, surprised at the climax his feelings had reached. It was as well then that Miss Fitzalan's tone had changed to unvarying frank composure. She must mean to warn him off.

The luncheon at Lord Ellersdale's passed off pleasantly enough, though the soreness of Cara's heart took the gilding off most things. She did not notice that their host addressed her with more than his usual familiarity. Mrs. Bligh had evidently been discussing her *protégée* with the old peer, for he suddenly asked her if she had any recollection of living in France.

"A very dim memory," she replied. "I was little past four when we left, and my mother died about a year and a half after—that was a gulf of sorrow in which everything, including memory, was swallowed up. Then comes a spell of storm, and tears, and despair, all blurred and indistinct."

"I trust there are better days before you," said Lord Ellersdale kindly. "Where were you staying—I mean, did you ever know?"

"I have always been told I was born in Tours."

"Ah, indeed! Those old towns of the Loiret are very picturesque," and he turned the conversation from his young guest's reminiscences.

"Did you tell my story to Lord Ellersdale?" asked Cara when she reached home. "Why did you trouble him?"

"Because I wanted to increase the interest he evidently took in you from the first. He is very rich, you know.

I should not wonder if he took a theatre for you, and gave you a good start."

"But, Mrs. Bligh, I could never manage a theatre."

"No matter; I could!"

. . . . . .

A little alarmed at Miss Fitzalan's increasing pallor and decreasing animation, Bellamy facilitated her leaving town as soon as possible, and at the same time made arrangements for her re-engagement at double the salary she had originally, much to Mrs. Bligh's satisfaction.

It was therefore in a very peaceful and happy mood that she laid her plans for a fortnight at the seaside. Rockbourne, on the coast of Dorsetshire, was the place selected. It had long been a favourite bathing locality with the neighbouring population, now its repute reached London; but the little town on the water's edge was still rustic in character and surroundings, and boasted but one hotel, which was more deserving the name of inn. Here rooms were secured for the distinguished actress and her companion, as Mrs. Bligh was amused to find herself bracketed.

The very morning they were to start Miss Fitzalan received a hasty scrawl from Miss Delamere. It was addressed from Valombrosa, Rockborough:—

"Here we are, my dear, in a sweet villa lent to me by my old friend, Sir F. Lorrimer; and I have just heard you have taken rooms at the White Horse Inn—an ideal place. Shall be delighted to see you. Tom and Ethel are dancing with joy at the notion of seeing you, and driving you about in their donkey-chaise. Send me a line, if I can do anything for you, for I am yours to command.—S. DELAMERE."

"What a nuisance!" cried Mrs. Bligh. "I knew her theatre was closed and she had gone out of town, but I did not think she had gone into the wilds. She will taint the whole landscape and atmosphere with her vulgarity!"

Rockbourne proved a happy choice. A little brawling stream, or "bourne," had, in the course of ages, worked its way between rocky sides to the sea, where waves and tides actively assisted its operations; fishermen's huts and cottages of various degrees were scattered among the rocks, and a few ornamental modern villas were built on an outer circle. Beyond the embouchure of the river stretched a wide bay, which offered a fairly safe anchorage. The air was fresh and balmy, the walks various and delightfully picturesque, and all, "save the presence of Miss Delamere," was divine. She lost no time in presenting herself. It was after an early dinner that she did so.

"You may go down and see her, Carry. I am exhausted by my journey, and am going to bed."

"My dear child, you are looking like a ghost!" cried Miss Delamere, with effusion, when she had embraced her. "I am thankful I was released early, before I got into your ethereal condition. Worn out with the pain of refusing all your lovers, eh? I hear you are awfully hard-hearted."

"Indeed!"

"And who do you think told me?"

"I cannot guess."

"Poor Jack Staunton!"

"Why, have you seen him? I thought he had gone away to some distant place in his yacht."

"No, he didn't. He just kept out of your way, you cold, cruel girl! Now he says he is very sorry he worried you. I never was so surprised in my life as when he walked in about a week ago, looking a wreck—a perfect wreck! He seems better now. He has been having matches—sailing-matches—with Mr. Willoughby, of Wickham Hall, who is a swell down here, and who is crazy about yachting. He has quite a party at his place now. My old friend, Sir Ferdinand Lorrimer, is there, and Captain Herbert, also some extra-fine ladies. I say, will you come to tea with me to-morrow?"

"Yes, if Mrs. Bligh does not want me?"

"Law, my dear, do you still knock under to that cranky old skinflint?"

"You must remember that Mrs. Bligh has been my best friend, and pray please do not apply those epithets to her."

"Well, well, bring her with you, and you will not mind if poor Staunton drops in? He wants to be friends with you, and nothing more."

"If Mrs. Bligh can come, I will—certainly; and, of course, I don't mind meeting Mr. Staunton if he is going to be sensible!"

Mrs. Bligh absolutely refused to drink tea at Valombrosa, but told Cara to go and "get done with it," for, if she refused, it would look as if she wanted to

void that crazy creature Staunton. So Cara went. She eturned to Mrs. Bligh in good spirits, declaring that she as quite satisfied with the change in her admirer's air nd manner, that in short he seemed quite sensible.

"Mr. Staunton wants us all—that is, you and I, Iiss Delamere and the children, to take a cruise with im on Thursday. He promised to invite Sir Ferdinand nd Captain Herbert. Perhaps Mr. Willoughby would e out in his yacht, and they might try a race."

"Go, if you like," returned Mrs. Bligh; "but I am ot going to risk my life."

"I think I should like to go. I am a good sailor; nd it would be a new experience."

The intervening days went over tranquilly and leasantly. Cara felt strengthened and refreshed. She esolved to resist useless regrets, and even avoid useless elf-reproaches; she would fix her mind on artistic success, nd press on the career so wonderfully opened to her.

Thursday dawned bright and clear, with just enough reeze to make the sea "break into dimples and laugh n the sun." The rendezvous was at the rugged little pier here the fishermen landed their scaly spoils, and the our was noon. Cara could not remember whether Miss elamere was to call for her or meet her at the tryst. he therefore lost a quarter of an hour waiting, and then alked down to the pier. There, at the steps, lay a mart boat, in which sat two sailors very accurately got p like man-o'-war's men, leaning on their oars, and, tanding at the top of the steps, was Staunton in yacht-

ing get-up, which suited him better than any other garments. He advanced to meet her, and she noticed that he looked pale, in spite of his healthily-brown skin.

"Good-morning," he said, coming forward to meet her. "I was afraid you were going to disappoint us."

"So sorry to have kept you waiting, Mr. Staunton, but I partly expected Miss Delamere to call for me."

"Well, she was not sure about it," he returned, "but the 'bairns' were desperately impatient, so I just sent them off to the yacht, and the gig has just returned."

"Oh, then let us join them as soon as possible," cried Cara, who could not bear to inconvenience anyone.

"By all means," he returned, descending the steps, and holding out his hand to help her into the boat. "Give way, men!" he called, as soon as Cara had been placed in the stern. "The wind is freshening from the north-east; she'll fly like a bird before it."

A look of exultation gleamed in his eyes as they danced over the water. Clearing the low headlands which sheltered the little cove they came in sight of the wide bay, and there, against the blue sky, lay the yacht, her mainmast, mizzen, and jib all set, and glorious in the golden sunshine, the white sails seeming to rise higher and higher as they neared the yacht. Her gangway was open, the ropes ready, the white decks shining in the light. In another minute they were alongside, yet another and they were on board.

"Welcome—a thousand welcomes!" cried Staunton.

"I am not surprised at your pride in such a beautiul vessel," said Cara.

He smiled, and uttered some sharp, quick commands. :he gig was hauled up swiftly, and made fast to the davits, .nd the anchor raised, while Cara looked round in vain or Miss Delamere and the children.

"Miss Delamere is down below," said Staunton, anvering her look. "The boy hurt his arm somehow, and is mother is binding up his wounds. Look here, Miss itzalan—isn't this a nice seat?" and he pointed to a hair on the taffrail, under the shadow of the mizzen. That's a place to sit and dream or read; and there—ıere's a place forward where you can stand and feel the ash and pulse of the creature as she bounds over the aves."

"Why, we are moving already."

"Ay; we will be flying soon," cried Staunton.

"But where—where is Miss Delamere?" asked Cara, ith rapidly increasing anxiety.

Staunton was silent for an instant, then a deep, dark ush rose to his brow.

"She is ashore," he said; "she couldn't join us. You re my only passenger; and we are bound for a cruise –to the coast of Ireland!"

CHAPTER XXI.

THE look of amazement and horror which came into her face silenced him.

Cara's horror at her situation was agonising. She felt she was in the power of a madman. For a moment everything swam before her, and with great difficulty she checked her impulse to scream aloud; she must keep her senses, and try to bring Staunton to his. How long would it take to reach the coast of Ireland—twenty-four hours or twenty-four weeks? Either would suffice to destroy her hitherto unsullied reputation. At the worst, she would risk death rather than remain on board.

"I did not think you would prove a deceitful traitor!" she said, assuming a firmness which belied her beating heart and trembling limbs. "Is this dastardly conduct worthy of an English sailor?"

"Hard words break no bones," he exclaimed, leaning against the bulwark and gazing at her intently. "How was it you were so easily persuaded that I would give you up? If you knew me better, you would know that when I did I'd have given up life too! I am resolved to make you my wife, and you shall have no choice! Why don't you love me? Why will you not love me? If it's because you like Trevelyan better, I can tell you it is lost time. He would not marry you, not if you asked him. He is

old to everything but ambition. He would be perfectly ontent to see you my wife, as he shall!"

"And do you think that such a base betrayal, such n infamous trap, will endear you to me? Listen! Mr. taunton, your only chance of recovering my good opinion to set me ashore at once."

"If I do, will you pledge me your word to marry me ithin twenty-one days of your landing?"

"If I were as false as yourself I would promise. As am not, I will only promise to consider the question."

Staunton laughed aloud, and began to pace to and fro.

"No, no, I am not to be got over with fair words—, nor with tears either!" for poor Cara's sorely tried rves began to give way, and her tears could not be strained, to her infinite annoyance. "No," continued aunton, "though every tear you shed is like a knife in heart I will not let them move me."

Appalled at the fierce resolution in his face Cara grew deadly white that Staunton, thinking she was about to nt, drew close to her. She shrank away with evident ror.

"What do you fear?" he exclaimed hoarsely. "Do u think I am a wild beast? I tell you, you are as safe board a vessel of mine as if you slept in your own me—of that you may be sure. But when we land the y after to-morrow it will be better for your good name we return to interview Mrs. Bligh as man and wife, or, anyrate, engaged to be married."

"That shall never be!" cried Cara, her colour return-

ing with the rush of indignation his words evoked. "I can escape! There is a refuge there!" pointing to the water—"that is, if I cannot touch the hearts of your men and induce them to help me. They cannot be such monsters as you are!"

Staunton laughed.

"I have guarded against that dodge. My men believe you are my wife, that you are insane, and that your mad point is a horror of me. *They* will not help you."

With a gesture of despair Cara sat down in the place Staunton had pointed out "as pleasant to read or dream in." The breeze was freshening; the yacht was cutting swiftly through the crisp wavelets. The land seemed terribly far away, and two or three sails were dotted on the horizon. Screams, tears, remonstrances, nothing seemed to avail. She set herself resolutely to think.

Staunton still paced the deck, sometimes uttering a brief command and gazing at the sails. Cara's sudden silence and composure alarmed him. The coast-line grew bolder and more indented by creeks and small gulfs. The wind veered somewhat to the south'ard, which inclined the yacht coastwards. Of this Cara was unaware, but she saw that Staunton called up another and an older man to the wheel. What was best to be done? Suppose no help came, what would be the result? No dread of censorious gossip should drive her into marriage with this terrible man. Yet what an awful alternative! to face even a friendly public with such a fearful scandal defacing her fair fame? What would Trevelyan think? Would he sus-

pect that she was a willing guest on board the yacht? or would he think of her with contemptuous pity as an unlucky victim? She flushed and quivered at the idea. Better that he should feel even a passing thrill of sympathy with the resolute pluck which had sent her to seek refuge in the watery depths over which she was gliding so swiftly. She looked at the rising waves, and shuddered at the thought of the chill sanctuary to which she feared she might be driven. Meanwhile, she feared to speak or move, and the precious minutes slipped away.

Gazing thus hopelessly at the land, as it grew dimmer across the increasing space of waters, her eye caught a line of dark smoke rising from behind a long, low spit which stretched out almost at right angles to the course they were steering. She saw, without heeding, a low, dark hull glide out from behind the projecting strip of rock and sand. It was a small steamboat or yacht, and was going at good speed in the wind's eye. The yacht's sailing-master soon espied her, and brought his battered glass to bear upon the stranger.

Staunton pursued his troubled walk to and fro. The steamer, meantime, ploughed her way towards them, coming up hand over hand; tossing a good deal, for the waves grew rapidly bigger, and gradually she placed the yacht between her and the coast. For some vague reason Cara's interest became aroused, and she watched the movements of the little vessel.

At last Staunton's eye was attracted. He seized one

of the ropes and swung himself up on the bulwark to scan the stranger.

"What ship's that?" he called to one of the men, who was leaning over the side.

"Don't know, sir. She's new to these waters."

Here a flag was run up to one of the masts, which, unrolling itself, displayed a deep blood-red heraldic griffin on a white ground.

"It must be Mr. Willoughby's new steam yacht, the *Fire Queen,*" exclaimed the sailor. "They say she is the fastest thing afloat."

Staunton made no reply, but walked forward and spoke in an emphatic way to the man at the wheel. The yacht immediately swerved a little, as if intending to escape the approaching steamer.

By this time Cara was thoroughly roused. She stood up, and holding a rope which dangled near, she stepped upon the seat in order to see more clearly what was going on. The steamer drew very near. Staunton watched her through a glass for a minute or two, then he walked rapidly aft, and called to Cara: "Come down! Come down! There's no good in showing yourself!" She paid no attention to him. He came and stood beside the chair on which she stood. "Do you hear! I'd lose my life rather than hurt you, but if you won't come down to the cabin I'll be forced to carry you, and I will!"

"It would be wiser not to touch me!" she returned, trembling with the excitement of dawning hope. "If you do, the struggle may be seen from the steamer.

Better let her come up and allow me to go on board. They will soon land me somewhere, and I will promise not to say anything of your base conduct; that my being here is an accident—a mistake."

His reply was to seize her in his arms. She struggled violently, though vainly, shrieking with all her force, hoping to draw attention from the crew or passengers of the steamer. He was furious, wild with the dread of losing his prize. Still Cara felt that he put out his strength against hers with a degree of care and gentleness which astonished her, seeing how agitated he was. Still, her horror at his touch, her infinite dread of being shut down in the cabin, and unable to avail herself of any chance of rescue, made her head reel.

Reaching the cabin Staunton deposited his precious burden on the sofa, and exclaiming: "I must win your forgiveness hereafter," he left her, locking the door carefully.

Meanwhile the owner of the *Fire Queen* and his guests were much excited by the cries for help brought to them on the wind against which they were steaming. These guests were a certain Lady Jane Manvers and her daughter, a Mr. Freeman, a Foreign Office *employé,* and Captain Herbert. They were specially invited for one of the trial trips of the *Fire Queen,* a steam-yacht built for Mr. Willoughby, with all improvements, regardless of expense. At the first sound of a cry Herbert snatched up a glass and mounted some way up the shrouds.

"By Heavens!" he exclaimed to Willoughby who stood

below, "I believe the woman is Miss Fitzalan. I have only caught a glimpse of her face. Stay! I see her better! Yes, it is! That savage scoundrel Staunton has seized her and carried her down below, I suppose. What's to be done, Willoughby?"

"We must get on board, and that won't be easy. Better not let him think we suspect anything. He can hardly run away from us, and once I get on board I'll let him know I am a magistrate!"

"The blackguard!" cried Herbert, descending to the deck. "He will frighten the poor girl out of her senses. You know he is quite mad about her."

"What in the world is the matter?" asked Lady Jane, coming up from below. She was an excitable, inveterate gossip, who enjoyed living in a state of wonderment chiefly at the errors of others.

"Herbert fancies Miss Fitzalan, the girl we have all been to see at the Regent's, is detained against her will on board that yacht by Staunton, that rich South African fellow!"

"You don't say so! How wonderful! how delightful! Why, it is like a Surrey melodrama. Won't you bring her on board our vessel, Mr. Willoughby? It would be most interesting to meet her—under such circumstances, too!"

Mr. Willoughby did not answer. He and Herbert walked apart, and evidently in deep consultation, their looks showing the gravity of the occasion. The *Fire Queen* kept on her way till considerably nearer Staunton's

yacht, when Willoughby called for a speaking-trumpet, and, hailing the *Sea Gull,* asked if Mr. Staunton was on board. Staunton replied by showing himself, shouting a hearty greeting and congratulation on the aspect of the new boat.

"Thanks," returned Willoughby. "How are you off for bread? Our stupid steward hasn't laid in half enough to take us to Falmouth, and I should be greatly obliged for a few loaves."

While this colloquy went on, a boat was lowered and manned at the steamer's side furthest from the *Sea Gull.*

"Of course," came back the answer. "How many loaves? I'll send them."

"Don't mind. We'll come. I want to speak to you."

Willoughby threw down the trumpet, and, followed by Herbert, hastily descended into the boat, which at once darted across the small space of water which now separated the yachts.

Uncertain whether Cara's cries and struggles had been perceived on board the steamer, Staunton thought it safer not to oppose Willoughby's evident intention to board the *Sea Gull,* and hoped that a careless welcome would disarm suspicion. He therefore seized the ropes and was soon on deck, followed by Herbert.

Meantime Cara sat in darkness, as all the port-holes were closed, and she could form no idea what was going on. Everything was quiet, and, as far as she could make out, the yacht still held on her course. Then suddenly came a noise of trampling on deck, of confusion, and a

hubbub of many voices; then the sounds drew nearer, the cabin door was flung open, and Herbert, flushed and agitated, rushed in.

"Miss Fitzalan! I trust in God you are safe and unhurt! Keep up, I implore you; you are safe now. That unfortunate ruffian is defeated. Come—come back with me to the steamer. Lady Jane Manvers and her daughter are there, and will take all possible care of you!"

The sudden rapturous sense of security made Cara dizzy, and, almost unconscious of what she was doing, she flew to Herbert, and clasped both her arms round his.

"How can I thank you enough? Oh! thank God, you have come! Do not leave me—not for a moment! Let us go away! There are some ladies, you say, on board the steamer? I will tell you how shamefully I was entrapped. Do not let anyone hurt that unhappy Mr. Staunton. He is mad, I am sure—quite mad!"

"Yes, he must be; but he ought to be punished for all that. He tried to attack Willoughby, but we overpowered him. One of his men belongs to this place, and knows Willoughby is a magistrate, so none of the crew liked to interfere. When you are safe, and a little more yourself, we'll decide what ought to be done. Come, let me help you on deck."

At the top of the companion ladder Mr. Willoughby joined them, and with infinite care they lowered Cara into the steamer's boat, and leaving the *Sea Gull* to her crazy commander, pulled rapidly away to the *Fire Queen*.

Here Lady Jane and her daughter were waiting, with ager anticipation, to receive the rescued damsel.

"Oh my dear Miss Fitzalan, what a fearful business!" ried Lady Jane, clasping Cara's hand in both her own. You are looking ghastly! Has that desperate villain urt you? I trust not. Come below with me. I have ttended ambulance classes. I have brandy and bandges and vaseline in the cabin. It is most fortunate I appened to be here! Hope you hadn't to shoot anyne, Captain Herbert? I'm sure it quite surpasses a ewspaper serial. Do support her—she can hardly stand!"

"Indeed, I can—thank-you so much. If I can be uiet and silent for half-an-hour I shall be quite myself." [er voice broke, and she burst into an almost hysterical ood of tears, as, leaning on Lady Jane, she made her ay to the cabin.

CHAPTER XXII.

"I HARDLY know what to do in the matter," said Mr. Willoughby.

The owner of the *Fire Queen* and his guests (all save one) assembled in the chief cabin as they steamed rapidly towards Rockbourne, and held high council as to what course ought to be taken to mete out justice to the culprit in the late occurrence.

"Of course," he continued, "he has got away for the present, but he is sure to be caught; and he could be punished, and bound over to keep the peace."

"Hanging is considerably too good for him," said Herbert.

"He ought to be brought before a magistrate—decidedly," cried Lady Jane; "in London, if possible. Then, just as his honour was about to pass sentence, Miss Fitzalan should appear, and implore mercy pathetically and gracefully. It would create quite a *furore*."

"It would be quite lovely, mamma!" exclaimed her daughter.

"Don't think she would do it," said Freeman. "It may be twisted by gossip into a very ugly business indeed. We may believe that Miss Fitzalan was decoyed into this affair. Ill-nature, which is always most potent,

would depict her as undertaking the cruise willingly enough. I should advise silence — which is certainly golden."

"There is a good deal of truth in that," quoth the host.

"It is too bad to let that ruffian go scot-free. We must be guided by Miss Fitzalan's own wishes," suggested Herbert.

"As her only friend in this gathering," said Lady Jane sagely, "I think you ought to find out what she wishes, though I should not be too ready to give in to any weak desire on her part to avoid publicity. The more an actress is advertised, the better for her."

"Still——" began Miss Manvers, but nobody heeded her.

"I should think Miss Fitzalan would see you now or join us," said Willoughby.

"She has taken some soup and a glass of champagne at my recommendation," added her ladyship, "so she is evidently recovering herself."

"She must be a plucky girl, or she'd have lost her senses."

Herbert ground his teeth and muttered something murderous.

"I will go and ascertain her wishes," said Lady Jane, with an air of importance, and left the cabin, returning almost directly to say that Miss Fitzalan would join them in a few minutes.

When Cara appeared she was quite composed, though

extremely white, and the strained look of terror not quite gone out of her eyes. She was strongly opposed to any plan of punishing the delinquent, and pointed out how painful an exposure of the strange affair would be to her.

By the time they reached the little harbour of Rockbourne she had persuaded her rescuers to yield to her arguments, at anyrate for the present, and everyone agreed to preserve unbroken silence on the subject.

Soon after this conclusion had been reached, the stoppage of the engines told them they had come to the end of their voyage, when Lady Jane (who was immensely excited) and Captain Herbert landed with Miss Fitzalan, whom they escorted to the hotel in order to restore her to Mrs. Bligh.

It was a beautifully clear evening. They found that lady sitting in the garden, which was sheltered from all "the airts the wind can blaw," enjoying a yellow-backed French novel. She had seen nothing whatever of Miss Delamere, and had no idea of the alarming adventure through which her "favourite pupil" had passed. Her fury against Miss Delamere, her gratitude to Lady Jane, Herbert—everyone—can be imagined. She saw in an instant the dangers and advantages of Lady Jane's espousing Cara's cause. First, she would tell everyone, under the seal of profound secrecy; secondly, she was rather an important society woman, and her companionship might neutralise the mischief she would most probably make. She was therefore full of cordiality,

gratitude, and good feeling; every now and then furtively wiping away a tear which would not come, while her caressing tenderness towards Miss Fitzalan was quite touching.

Herbert was silent and preoccupied. His admiration for Cara had always smouldered because it had not been fanned. Now he was delightfully haunted by the memory of her joy at seeing him, of the eagerness with which she clung to him. "Of course if might be the excitement of terror," he thought; "but was it all terror?" At anyrate, he would relieve his mind by avowing his love for her. "But how about Lady Sarah Chillingham?" asked conscience. "Pooh! I can compromise with one or the other," returned passion.

Finally, the sympathetic visitors took leave.

"I must not forget to say that Mr. Willoughby charged me to request the pleasure of your and Miss Fitzalan's company for a few days, or as long as you can stay," exclaimed Lady Jane, shaking hands with Mrs. Bligh. "I am doing lady of the house at Wickham Hall, and we will try and make Miss Fitzalan forget the dreadful shock she has received; a new place will divert her mind. Do promise to come; name your own time. My daughter will be very pleased to continue her acquaintance with your charming *protégée.*"

"You and Mr. Willoughby are extremely kind. I am sure the society of such friends will do Miss Fitzalan a world of good. If to-morrow afternoon will suit——"

"Yes, admirably. I'll drive over and fetch you about 5.30," interrupted Lady Jane.

"Thanks. You are most considerate."

"Why did you promise to go to Wickham?" cried Cara, as soon as the door had closed on her ladyship. "I would much rather have stayed here quietly."

"I daresay you would—so would I; but to be invited and generally taken up by a dragon of virtue and exclusiveness like Lady Jane Manvers, after so very doubtful an adventure as you have had, is too important an advantage to be rejected. You must be as interesting and fascinating as you can manage to be. I often wonder, Carry, where you will end, and how far you will go. You are lucky—decidedly lucky! As to that low-minded wretch, Miss Delamere, I hope she will keep out of my way for the next few days. I firmly believe she has been bribed by that idiot Staunton. I am desperately disposed to expose her."

"I cannot believe she would be so base," cried Cara.

"Then why did she not send word to you that she could not go cruising?"

"It is much more likely that she did send, and something occurred to prevent the message reaching me."

"It is still more likely that you are a credulous simpleton! Now I insist on your going to bed. You're as pale as a ghost, and shivering as if you had the palsy. You shall have some arrowroot or beef-tea to put you sleep. A good night's rest will make you all right again. I hope that woman will hold her tongue."

"What woman?" asked Cara wonderingly.

"Lady Jane Manvers, to be sure."

"I do not think she will."

"All the more reason for going to stay with her."

The next morning found Cara much revived already. he adventures of yesterday began to assume the aspect f a bad dream. Mrs. Bligh sent up her breakfast, with ı injunction to remain in bed for another hour or two.

Meantime, Miss Delamere, serene in the consciousess that she had managed her affairs very cleverly, rrived at the hotel before Mrs. Bligh had left her om.

"Miss Delamere, indeed!" she exclaimed when that dy's name was brought up to her. "Pray ask Miss elamere to sit down. I shall be with her in a few inutes," and she proceeded to complete her toilet in reat haste. As soon as it was possible she "descended a harvest of vengeance," telling herself that she must eep a strong guard on her temper.

"Ah! Mrs. Bligh, I have never been so distressed nd annoyed in my life! Do you know, I sent off a ote to Miss Fitzalan at half-past ten yesterday morning, aying I could not leave home. The fact is, Sir Ferinand Lorrimer telegraphed to me to meet him at angholme and bring the children, and I didn't like to efuse—he has such a fancy for my boy. I gave one the under-gardeners a shilling to take my note to you once. When I came back at night I was astonished ot to find a word from either of you."

"Oh, indeed, were you?" superciliously, as Miss Delamere paused for breath.

"Of course I was; so I made inquiry. The wretch, it seems, had gone straight to a public-house, got beastly drunk, forgot all about my note, staggered home, and slept all night with my note in his filthy pocket! Here it is."

"I do not want to see it, thank-you! I wish to know the name of this drunken noodle. The result of this broken appointment has been very serious, and"—with sudden fury—"I'll find that man and get at the truth of his story, and have him severely punished. What's his name?"

"Law! Mrs. Bligh, you frighten one! I don't know the man's name," exclaimed Miss Delamere, growing somewhat pale in spite of her rouge. "The gardener can tell you. The stupid brute is dismissed, and I haven't an idea where he can be found."

"I'll find him; be sure of that!"

"And how is Miss Fitzalan?" uneasily.

"Alive and well, thank God! in spite of the awful experience of yesterday. I have insisted on her keeping her room until it is time to go to Wickham Hall this afternoon."

"Why, what is the matter with her?"

"That strange creature, Staunton, decoyed her on board his yacht, and set off for Ireland, or India, or some distant place, and if Mr. Willoughby, in his new steam-yacht, had not intercepted them, God only knows what would have happened!"

"Good heavens! You make me tremble! I never :eamt of anything so dreadful!"

"No, I daresay you never *dreamt* it!"

"My goodness, Mrs. Bligh! it isn't my fault!"

"Oh no, my dear. But I shall find out where to .y the blame. I believe Sir Ferdinand is to be one of ur party at Wickham, and I shall beg of him to help ıe in my search for your missing messenger." A little ·iumphant laugh emphasised the speech.

Miss Delamere felt rather sick.

"I am awfully sorry that an incident for which I am ot responsible should have turned you against me in ıat way. But you are an obstinate woman, Mrs. Bligh, nd there is no use in talking to you. I shall say good-ıorning. I hope you will be in a better temper when ·e meet again."

. . . . .

It was refreshing to Cara to find herself in a new place, ·here nothing reminded her of her professional sur-ɔundings, or of Staunton and other wearisome admirers. he spent much thought on the question of how Tre-elyan would take the news of Staunton's attempt to arry her off.

"I suppose he will think very little about it. I have o share in his interest. How weak I am to care! I hall grow stronger when I feel better, and time has ealed the bruises I have courted." She tried to think f other things. Still, a longing desire that the task of er rescue had fallen to Trevelyan rather than Herbert,

of whose love-making airs she was a little in dread, took possession of her mind.

Lady Jane was punctual, and both the Londoners enjoyed the drive of six or seven miles through a picturesque country.

Wickham Hall was a delightful home, very much in the same style as Ellersdale Abbey, only on a smaller scale. Mrs. Bligh and her pupil received a very warm welcome, followed by a dinner where the viands and the talk were equally exhilarating. In the course of it the host said to Cara: "I think you know Trevelyan? He is coming down the day after to-morrow. Your adventure would make capital copy for him."

"Don't talk about it, Willoughby," cried Herbert. "Don't you see how the mention of her horrible experience drives the colour from Miss Fitzalan's cheek? Let us help her to forget."

CHAPTER XXIII.

WHEN Trevelyan accepted Mr. Willoughby's invitation to run down for a few days, and get the London smoke blown out of his brains, he little thought he was going to meet the fate he so resolutely evaded in town. He knew that Miss Fitzalan had gone away for a short holiday, and found he sorely missed the mingled pain and pleasure of watching her from some obscure corner of the theatre—a pleasure in which he frequently indulged —but he was not sure where she had gone.

The weather had changed the afternoon he arrived at Wickham. A northerly breeze was driving occasional sharp showers against the carriage windows when the train paused at the little station of Wickham-cum-Hatherly, where he found a dogcart waiting. The drive across a very open stretch of grazing-land was decidedly chilly, and he was glad to find a bright wood fire, and a tea-table spread near it, when he was shown into an inner picturesque hall, much used as a general sitting-room.

"Mr. Trevelyan," said the footman audibly.

"Wasted words," thought that gentleman, seeing no one at his first glance; but before the thought formed itself a fashionably-dressed figure rose from a window seat, a newspaper in its hand, and said: "Very glad to see you, Mr. Trevelyan."

"Ah! Lady Jane Manvers! I did not know I was to have the pleasure of meeting you."

"I am helping George Willoughby, who is a cousin of mine, to receive his guests. Let us have tea; you must be cold. What a horrid day for early June! All the rest have gone to D——, for Mrs. Bligh wanted a reel of cotton, or something equally important; so Mr. Willoughby has driven them over in the waggonette."

"Mrs. Bligh!" repeated Trevelyan, feeling a little bewildered.

"Yes, Mrs. Bligh. You know, Mrs. Bligh and Miss Fitzalan are staying here. She is really a sweet thing. We have all been so anxious about her."

"Has she been ill?"

"Oh, no——" And Lady Jane stopped abruptly as a footman brought in a silver spirit-lamp and kettle. "Sugar, Mr. Trevelyan?" she asked, as she took her place at the table. "Come and sit down. I am sure you are a very prudent person, safe and silent, so I don't mind telling you why we have been so distressed about that poor, dear girl. We mean to keep it a most profound secret. I would not mention it to anyone but yourself. It is altogether a most extraordinary story—equal to the wildest shilling shocker."

Trevelyan looked at her a little surprised, but, knowing her propensity to gossip and exaggerate, did not anticipate anything very dreadful.

When, however, Lady Jane plunged into her narrative his indifference was quickly changed to the deepest,

the most painful interest. He instinctively took a seat with his back to the light, for he did not feel quite sure he could control his expression.

With ample detail she proceeded to describe every incident of the remarkable encounter with Staunton's yacht; the recognition of Miss Fitzalan by Herbert; the struggle he descried through the glass; Willoughby's excuse for gaining access to the *Sea Gull;* the mad opposition of Staunton when they insisted on seeing the young lady; the struggle between him and Mr. Willoughby, when the former either slipped or had something of the nature of a fit, for Willoughby declared he was no match for him in strength.

Trevelyan was aghast at the idea of what agonies of terror the sensitive creature he would have gladly sheltered from every ill must have endured.

"I wonder Miss Fitzalan kept her senses!" he exclaimed. "That Staunton must be mad! It is a most serious matter, his craze for her. What's to be done with an unfortunate fellow who is off his head? Mrs. Bligh ought to take advice about it. You are quite right, Lady Jane. Do not speak of it to anyone; you may rely on my absolute silence. All kinds of absurd, unpleasant stories would arise round such an extraordinary central fact."

"That's what George Willoughby and Captain Herbert say. Oh! by the way, is the engagement with Lady Sarah Chillingham announced yet? I mean Captain Herbert's?"

"I do not know."

"At anyrate, it is talked of everywhere. I don't think Lady Sarah would be pleased to see how devoted he is to Miss Fitzalan. I never saw a man so far gone, though he does his best to hide it. I declare, here they are! I did not think they could get back so soon. Not a word of our conversation, Mr. Trevelyan."

Before he could reply the door opened to admit Mrs. Bligh, who was followed by the rest, the rear being brought up by the host—a stout, square, sandy-haired man, with a strong, good-humoured, somewhat bull-dog style of countenance.

Trevelyan looked eagerly and earnestly at Cara to see, if possible, what traces her late unpleasant adventure had left on her fair face. He was not so much absorbed, however, as to omit noticing that Mrs. Bligh had Herbert's arm, while he seemed to aid her halting steps with tender care.

Miss Fitzalan appeared fairer and sweeter than ever to Trevelyan's anxious eyes. The cool air had brought a faint colour to her cheek, her expression had a certain pathos, her eyes a wistful gravity which touched his heart, and the tendril-like meshes of her hair, which curled over the edge of her little black velvet toque, seemed of a richer, redder brown.

"Beastly weather for the first week of June," exclaimed Freeman. "We are thankful to get under shelter."

"Ah! Mr. Trevelyan, delighted to see you," said Mrs.

ligh. "You are a sort of vanishing point, perpetually isappearing just when you have made yourself most greeable. You hadn't been near us for months before e left town."

"How goes it, Dick?" from Herbert, who was remov-ıg Mrs. Bligh's cloak.

Trevelyan answered gaily, then he was introduced to liss Manvers, who had only come out that spring, and t last was able to exchange greetings with Cara. She nly bowed, and said: "How do you do, Mr. Trevelyan?" ınd they all gathered round the tea-table. The host ever drank tea, so he and Trevelyan, who was a ıvourite with him, talked apart of politics, investments, nd such-like masculine topics, apparently much in-erested in each other's views and ideas.

When Trevelyan gave his attention to the tea-drinkers gain Mrs. Bligh had disappeared. Miss Manvers, her ıother, and Freeman were busy discussing a fancy-ball,) which they were all going the following week—Herbert ad drawn a chair close to Miss Fitzalan, and was speak-ıg gravely—for him—and with much earnestness. She stened to what he was saying with polite attention, and ccasionally smiled. Trevelyan had just moved, intend-ıg to approach her, when she rose, saying she would o to her room, as she had letters to write. Trevelyan pened the door for her.

"I little thought I was to have the pleasure of meet-ıg you here," he said. Voice and eyes both affirmed : was really a pleasure.

"Our visit was rather unexpected," she returned. "It is a sweet place. I feel I can rest here."

"Rest must be an infinite relief to you."

"It is indeed."

She bent her head, and passed out into the hall, from which a fine staircase led to the upper storey.

"Come along to the stables," cried the host. "I've just had a pair of cobs sent to me on trial. I want your opinion of them. Freeman, will you come?"

Freeman hesitated.

"Don't martyrise yourself to politeness, Mr. Freeman," said Lady Jane blandly. "I am going to take forty winks, May must read me to sleep; and if you don't accompany Mr. Willoughby, you will be alone in your glory."

She nodded, smiled, and left them.

"Aha, Freeman! Her ladyship is a prudent chaperon, and no mistake," cried Willoughby laughing. "You hot-headed youngsters need a judicious shove on to the lines whereby it is your duty to travel!"

Freeman laughed, and the four men departed to the stables.

Billiards were the order of the evening. Cara could only look on at the game; yet she was well amused, for Trevelyan sat beside her and talked to her most of the time. When they went to their rooms at night Cara, as was her custom, assisted Mrs. Bligh to undress. That lady seemed preoccupied, and kept silence until she was inducted into her dressing-gown; then she sank down in a

comfortable armchair, and said, with a sigh: "You are a good girl, Carry—a very good girl." Words of approval were rare from Mrs. Bligh, and consequently much valued. "But"—there is always a "but"—"you are very foolish."

"I daresay I am. Tell me in what particular way."

"You let that rather interesting fellow, Trevelyan, sit by you all the evening; that wouldn't have mattered so much, but you looked up at him with eyes that said too plainly what delight you had in listening to him. You have, unfortunately, expressive eyes, child."

Cara coloured to the roots of her hair. She said steadily, however: "Yes, I do like to listen to him; he talks well."

"Ay, but your eyes said more than that. You are fresh and sensitive still, and I daresay I am torturing you. Do not let yourself get fond of Trevelyan. You are inclined to fall in love with him, unless I make a great mistake. Now, he may admire you, *but*—he does not want to marry you, and doesn't want to entangle himself—nor, to do him justice, would he dream of anything else—nor must you. You are perfectly straight *now*, and nothing save matrimony would suit a girl like you. Believe me, however warmly, ay, and sincerely, men may vow and protest, nothing but the links of the law can hold them—the majority. *I* know it."

"Is it possible you think it necessary to warn me?" cried Cara indignantly. "If Mr. Tevelyan wishes to avoid entanglement I will help him."

"Good! Well, guard your thoughts, then your eyes

cannot betray you. Remember, I know you; therefore, I perceive what would probably escape the notice of others. Now, don't let us talk any more. Go away to your bed, and get done with tears and indignation before I see you again."

"I will!" cried Cara, calling up her courage, "I believe you are a wise, true friend, though your words are hard."

She kissed her and went away.

Next morning Miss Fitzalan descended, with pale cheeks certainly, but also with a cheerful countenance and smiling eyes, to breakfast, and greeted Trevelyan with friendly gaiety. She sat between her host and Captain Herbert, conversing in a lively fashion with both.

The wind had changed, and summer had returned, though there was still a slight breeze. Willoughby proposed they should all try his new steam-yacht again, and make a short trip to see some curious rocks which were some miles west of Wickham. This all agreed to, except Miss Fitzalan, who excused herself and Mrs. Bligh.

"I am sure I am not surprised at your having had enough of the sea, dear," exclaimed Lady Jane significantly.

Cara flushed up.

"Well, do as you like, even though it is not what I should like," said the host. "Have the victoria out. My coachman has an eye for a pretty country, and will show you round."

"And let me give you a lesson in billiards, Miss Fitzalan.

You remember I inducted you into that noble game at Ellersdale last year," said Herbert.

"Thank-you; I shall be very glad to learn," she returned, with a sweet upward glance.

"Good Heavens!" thought Trevelyan. "Is it possible this thoughtful, delicate creature has a coquettish facet to her character?" and a deep disgust with the lightness of feminine nature seized his soul.

"Right, Herbert! You stay at home and take charge of these ladies."

"May I ask if there is any truth in the reports of your engagement to Lady Sarah Chillingham?" asked Trevelyan, as he strolled to and fro before the entrance with Herbert, waiting for the rest of the party.

"Well, no. My uncle is rather anxious we should make a match of it. I don't much care."—"Hang his curiosity!" was his mental comment.

"Going to stay here any longer?" was Trevelyan's next question.

"Don't know exactly. Are you?"

"I leave the day after to-morrow."

Here the host and Lady Jane appeared. Miss Manvers and Freeman followed, and they started for the private landing-place which belonged to Wickham Hall. Herbert looked after them, then strolled round part of the pleasure-grounds under the windows of the house, humming an air from *Boccace*, and finally went indoors. He kicked his heels in the library for some time, and grew extremely impatient, then he sallied forth and, catching one of the

housemaids, sent a message to Miss Fitzalan asking if she was disposed to try a game of billiards.

Then Cara appeared.

"I hope I have not kept you waiting?"

"No matter. I am quite ready to wait indefinitely if only you *will* come."

"You are too good, Captain Herbert."

"Come, then; we have the place to ourselves. Let us set to work."

They adjourned to the billiard-room. Herbert proceeded to lecture and exemplify until he noticed how pale and weary she looked, for she had no motive to spur her to smiles and animation.

"Good Heavens! What a brute I am!" he exclaimed, laying down his cue. "Keeping you on your feet and boring you with all this bosh! Do sit down here," pushing forward a light, luxurious settee. "I have something to tell you, something connected with your alarming adventure."

Cara was caught.

"What can it be?" she exclaimed, taking the seat he indicated.

Herbert walked to and fro once, and then threw himself into a chair beside her.

"It may be a matter of no moment to you. To me it is everything. You must know what a charm you exercised over me from the first moment we met, in spite of the indifference you showed me. But the other day, when you flew to me—ah! what a moment it was!—and

lung to my arm, my whole heart was suddenly absorbed ı you, the possibility of being essential to you intoxicated ıe, and ever since I have been thirsting for an opportunity ıf avowing the intense love with which you have inspired ne. Can you give me some hope, my darling? Am too bold?"

"Pray do not say any more, Captain Herbert," interıpted Cara decidedly, for she was extremely annoyed ıd embarrassed by this outburst. "I am so sorry you ave taken this fancy. You have always been very nice ıd kind, and I do not like to give you even temporary ıin. But just think how foolish it would be to vex Lord llersdale. You ought to marry in your own rank, and in mine."

"How can you speak in such a cold-blooded manner, y dearest angel! True love laughs at sordid considera-ɔns. Legal ceremonies, worldly conditions, I care for ɔne of these things, only to call you mine—to fly from ıe falsities of society and live for each other."

"You would be quite miserable if you tried that sort thing," said Miss Fitzalan quietly, "and I don't fancy at all." She rose up as she spoke. "Do put it all ıt of your head, Captain Herbert. I prefer my prossion to everything and everyone. I hope you will rget this difference of opinion, and be friends with me ;ain."

So saying she left him in a state of anger and mortiɛation, from which he took some time to recover.

. . . . . .

The next day's post brought Herbert a letter from his uncle's confidential servant, saying that his lordship was very unwell, and wished to see his nephew at once. "Prince Charming" therefore bade farewell to his host, and started for town by the next train.

CHAPTER XXIV.

To Cara the disappearance of Herbert was an in-
inite relief. She and her chaperon had but two days
nore of her broken and agitated holiday to pass in the
reezy, invigorating atmosphere of the sea coast, and
Mr. Bellamy was very anxious to see both Miss Fitzalan
nd Mrs. Bligh, to discuss autumn plans and a new play
or next season.

"A new play!" exclaimed Cara. "That will be
lelightful. I shall have no time to think of anything else."

"Are you so pleased because someone or something
lse has too great a hold on you?" asked Mrs. Bligh drily.

"What do you mean?" returned Cara, the colour
nounting to her cheeks, though she laughed in an un-
mbarrassed manner.

"Experience has taught me much, child."

Cara was indeed glad of anything that would divert
er thoughts from the wounded self-esteem which must
lways make a woman's heart ache when she thinks she
as bestowed her love where it is not desired.

The sudden departure of Herbert was less a relief
han a distracting puzzle to Trevelyan. It was possible
hat his uncle had really recalled him, while other
ymptoms pointed to the possibility of his rejection by
Miss Fitzalan. He was further disturbed by the serious

uneasiness which Staunton's daring attempt to carry off the object of his almost insane adoration created. It was impossible to say what he would do next. Trevelyan determined to return at once to town, and as much as possible to watch over the girl, who, however he resisted her influence, absorbed his heart, his imagination, more and more.

The first person to greet Mrs. Bligh and her *protégée* was Bellamy. He invited himself to dinner with them the day they arrived, and came with a pocketful of offers of engagements, suggestions of tours, *and* a play. Over these important subjects they sat late in conclave.

Next morning Cara had an early visit from her friend Mrs. Harding, with whom she enjoyed a long confidential talk, and confided to her the daring attempt of Staunton to force her into marriage with him. Susan did not allow her friend to see how alarmed she was by this mad proceeding. She turned the conversation on her own affairs, in which Cara was sincerely interested, and, at once soothed and relieved by this opening of her heart, Cara went down to the theatre, where she was enthusiastically received by a crowded house.

When about half-way through the performance she caught a glimpse of a well-known face, partially concealed by the curtain of a private box. Her heart seemed to cease beating for a moment, and then throbbed wildly. She did not know Trevelyan was in town. She did not think he would come to see the play again when he had seen it so often before. Could it be to look at

her? She must not let her mind dwell on such an idea. Yet it stayed with her, and gave infinite grace and tenderness to her acting. Never had she won warmer applause, or deserved it so much.

She half hoped to meet Trevelyan at the stage-door. He might have waited, as he had done on some few occasions, to give her a word or two of thoughtful approbation; but he was not there. Nevertheless, she went away to her home happier than she had been for some time, though she reproached herself for being weak and spiritless.

"Here, Carry!" said Mrs. Bligh, when they met next morning. "Here is an invitation from Lord Ellersdale to luncheon. He makes rather a point of your coming. I do not feel very well, but I will try and go."

"Pray do, Mrs. Bligh. I always feel a little afraid of Lord Ellersdale; he is so critical, so desperately superior."

"He is sometimes, but not to you. You ought to cultivate him, Carry; he might prove a powerful friend; besides——" She stopped short and seemed lost in thought; then she resumed, in a commonplace tone: "You are evidently a great favourite, child. Your reception last night was splendid. Bellamy must give you another rise before you sign a fresh contract for his tour. By the way, you want another dress or two, both for yourself and Kitty. Let us go round to Madame Leclerc before luncheon and choose one or other."

Having discussed this important matter with profound

interest in Madame Leclerc's show-room, Mrs. Bligh declared herself far too ill with a bad headache to go and eat luncheon and do the agreeable with anyone. No, Carry must go by herself. So Carry went, not too readily.

"I must make Mrs. Bligh's apologies, my lord," she said, when she had greeted the old peer, who looked exceedingly ill, not to say cadaverous. "She is suffering from an old enemy, nervous headache, and fears she would not be an amusing companion."

"Ah! I am sorry she is suffering. I know what headache is myself. You must tell her how much I regret her absence and its cause. Now, tell me of your reception last night. I am told it was most flattering," said Lord Ellersdale when they sat down to table.

"It was indeed! I was quite surprised."

"That is a properly modest reply. I should like to see you act, for, to speak candidly, you do not give me the idea of a great actress."

"No. I begin to think I never shall be anything great. Once I dreamt of being a tragic actress, but the more I learn the more my ambition shrinks."

"That shows you have some sense, not a very common quality, especially in young ladies. But I want to speak to you on another subject. Probably your friend, Mrs. Bligh, has told you that I take some interest in you, for I have an idea I know, or knew, something of your father."

"Indeed!" cried Cara in great surprise, her eyes filling with tears. "My poor father! He was very un-

fortunate. I have always believed he had been a gentleman; ever since I can remember he was a great invalid, but very kind and gentle to me."

Lord Ellersdale listened to her, his dark eyes fixed intently on her speaking face.

"Mrs. Bligh tells me your real name is Leigh?"

"I believe so. My father was always called Leigh —Captain Leigh."

"And his Christian name?"

"Arthur A. Leigh."

"What did the other 'A' stand for?"

"I do not know."

"And your mother? Do you remember her?"

"Very faintly. She is like a beautiful dream to me. To think that such a creature was *my* mother!"

"What was her name?" said Lord Ellersdale huskily.

"I cannot tell you. I know we used to be in France. I just remember a big archway and a door in the side, where we went into our house."

"Do you know how old you were then?"

"No; I must have been very little. I do remember I had a brother then. He was very ill, then he disappeared. I have heard that he died in France. Then my mother died, and my father scarcely ever spoke to me, though he used to caress me and cry. Later my stepmother came. Oh! I cannot bear to think of that terrible time. I suppose Mrs. Bligh told you how I escaped the night of the fire, and let everyone think I

was dead? I suppose that was very wrong, but I can never regret doing so."

Lord Ellersdale did not reply; he was thinking deeply.

"Is there anyone who knew you in those bad times who could identify you now? I should like to ascertain if you are the daughter of Arthur Leigh."

"I have one friend who knew me then. She is now in London, Mrs. Harding. She often comes to see me."

"Indeed!" And Lord Ellersdale fell into a profound silence. "I will let you go now," he said, looking up suddenly. "Yours is a curious story. Truth—if it is truth—is indeed stranger than fiction. Yes, you had better leave me now. I believe you are a very good girl, and have had rather a cruel life. I should like to help you, but I must know more."

"Pray do not trouble about me. You are too good, and"—smiling and colouring—"you know that, thanks to Mrs. Bligh, I can earn all I want."

"I know! I know!" said the old peer absently. "It is a precarious life. I shall not detain you longer, for I can say no more at present. You will believe, I am sure, that I am not actuated by idle curiosity." He rang the bell, which always stood beside him. "Is the carriage ready?" he asked when the servant appeared.

"Yes, my lord."

"Then let it take Miss Fitzalan home and return for me. I feel inclined to go out to-day. Good-bye, my dear young lady. I hope you will come and see me again soon."

Cara returned home rather bewildered by her sudden dismissal and the extraordinary interest Lord Ellersdale took in her story. Yet how angry he would be if he knew that his favourite nephew and heir was in love with and wanted to marry her! But did he want to *marry* her? Surely he would not dare to think of any less lasting tie. Certainly he never alluded to matrimony in his declaration. However, what he wished or intended was of little or no consequence. He had passed out of her life.

She found Mrs. Bligh at her writing-table reading some letters and looking displeased.

"I did not think you would be back so soon," she said as Cara came in.

"It is half-past four," she returned.

"Indeed! I did not know it was so late. I am greatly annoyed. That stupid little paper, *What Society Says*, has a very unmistakable hint at your yacht adventure, and here"—taking a note from the table—"Mr. Trevelyan writes to warn me that Staunton has reappeared. He says—where is it? oh, here—that, as I may imagine, he had heard the story at Wickham, and as he fears that wretched man may do other wild things and frighten you, he advises us to take counsel with Hammond as to what measures ought to be taken. He seems quite anxious about you. I like Trevelyan. He is a sensible, masterful man, one of the few honest ones I have met in my life, if I am not greatly mistaken."

"I am awfully afraid of Jack Staunton!" cried Cara,

growing very white. "I always did dread him. I thought I saw him the day before yesterday. Yes, dear Mrs. Bligh, do let us ask Mr. Hammond what is best to be done."

"Yes, we will. Here is a letter for you, Carry."

"For me? Ah! it is from Mr. Staunton."

"Can you ever forgive me? I have been mad, quite mad! I am mad still! If you will let me look upon your face once more, and explain how I was misled by one traitor and betrayed by another; if you will only say 'I forgive you, go in peace,' I *will* go —go for some years. But I must have a gleam of hope, or I cannot keep from doing dreadful things. As I hope to be saved, by all that is sacred, I will go away and never offend you again if you will see me and speak a kind word to me. I will wait three days for your answer. If it does not come I will force my way in and see you whatever happens.—Your lover, your slave,

"J. STAUNTON."

White and trembling Cara handed the epistle to Mrs. Bligh.

"It's all an awful nuisance!" she exclaimed. "But do not let it get on your nerves in this way. You will be quite unequal to your work to-night. You must keep up, and I will write to Mr. Hammond for an appointment—now, before I leave this table."

"Yes, pray do. And shall you not answer Mr. Trevelyan?"

"Yes, of course. Give me his note. He has changed his address. Let me see: 'Hampden House.' Oh, it is the huge building just behind Holborn that is all flats. It was only finished eighteen months ago, and it is almost impossible to find a vacant spot in it. You—you had

›etter not write to Staunton till we have consulted Hamnond."

"Is their big ball fixed for to-morrow night?" asked Cara.

"It is. I cannot go. I am feeling ill and headachy. Cou do not want a chaperon either; you can go alone, :hild?"

"Oh yes; I shall get away directly the curtain goes lown, and just look in for an hour."

"Do so. You had better show yourself."

The ball was to be given in honour of Miss Hamnond, who was to be married in the morning, and everyone artistic, dramatic, literary, distinguished in any way, vas bidden to the feast.

Miss Fitzalan was, by this time, quite accustomed to 'ace the public, and would not on any account trouble ıer friend, Mrs. Bligh, to dress and go out on her account. Yet she had a strong wish that she could have the company of her chaperon. She, however, struggled gallantly ınd successfully against depression and fear, and did ıerself full justice on the stage.

The night of Mrs. Hammond's ball she kept on a charming dress of white and silver, still new, in which she appeared in the last scene of the play. She was, therefore, soon ready to drive to Mrs. Hammond's once her task was over. The rooms were very full when she reached Portland Place, and Cara was patiently striving to win her way to where the hostess, in ruby velvet and

diamonds, was receiving the congratulations of her guests, when a voice she knew well said: "Pray give me a word, for I cannot stay." She turned to meet Trevelyan's eyes. "I have waited in hopes of meeting you," Trevelyan went on. "Is Mrs. Bligh here?"

"No, she is not quite well."

"Sorry to hear it. Do you think she would receive me if I called about eleven to-morrow?"

"Yes, I am sure she would. We are both greatly obliged for your kind desire to serve us."

"I am anxious you should not be worried by that very unmanageable admirer of yours. I saw him this morning, and he promised me to go and look after his yacht which he left at Southampton; so, for the moment, you may feel at rest. Before he returns we shall have devised some scheme of defence. I may call to-morrow about eleven?"

"Certainly, Mr. Trevelyan."

"Then good-night. I only came to have a word with you. I am going back to my rooms to burn the midnight oil. I have a paper to finish before dawn." A wistful look into her eyes and he was gone.

These few words cheered Cara—why, she could not tell. However, having greeted Mrs. Hammond, she found a seat beside a well-known, but somewhat elderly actress, who, after a little talk, said she must leave, as late hours did not suit her.

"I think I shall go with you," exclaimed Cara, rising,

when further movement war arrested by the sudden appearance of Staunton, who stood still in front of her.

"Ha!" he exclaimed. "You did not expect to see me. But I was determined to see you. Don't be angry; I only want to say a word, then I will go. Have you read my letter? Are you going to answer it?"

"Yes; you shall have an answer within the time you yourself fixed."

"I have made a discovery since I wrote to you. I know why you will not look at me, or hear me. Trevelyan is as false as hell! He has won you from me."

"For Heaven's sake, do not speak so loud!" exclaimed Cara, trembling.

"Why should I not? Ah! were you taking your last look when you raised your eyes so sweetly, so lingeringly, to his just now? Aha, I was watching! Do you hope to see him again?" He laughed a wild, harsh laugh. "Time—a very short time, will show! Remember me to-morrow!"

With a strange, uncouth gesture he rushed away.

Cara stood where he left her for a second; a terrible conviction that she read murder in the man's eyes urged her to prompt, instinctive action. She struggled through the crowd to the cloak-room, then comparatively free, and got her cloak. She rapidly descended the stairs and called for her brougham, for she had told the driver to keep as close as he could. Then she laid her hand on the arm of one of the policemen who were stationed there to regulate the traffic.

"Policeman, you must come with me. I am convinced a murder will be committed before half an hour if we do not arrive in time!"

The man gazed at her incredulously.

"Do not doubt me," she said, gasping for breath. "The man who will do it has all but avowed his intention to me! Come! I will hold you harmless. I will tell all I know—all my reasons. If this crime is committed through your refusal to accompany me, it will be bad for you."

Impressed by her voice, manner, and appearance, the man, who happened to be a sergeant, exclaimed: "I'll come, miss."

He gave a few directions to a constable who stood near, and turned to Cara: "Where to, miss?"

"Here is my carriage. I will go with you," she said, then, calling to the driver: "Hampden House, quick!" she sprang into the brougham, followed by the sergeant, and they dashed away into the semi-darkness of ill-lighted back-streets through which the driver, hoping to make a short cut, drove rapidly.

CHAPTER XXV.

COLLECTING her ideas by an effort of will, Cara tried) give her companion some information as to the cause f her alarm, dwelling on her strong conviction that the nfortunate Staunton was not sane.

"I see, miss," said the man sagely, "a fellow as is esperate jealous is always, in a manner of speaking, ıad, and very dangerous, too. If he gets hold of a istol—and a gentleman that's well-off generally has ıese sort of tools—he might shoot you or me as well as ıe other gentleman; and I would advise you to keep ut of sight so soon as you've brought me to the place.)f course, I cannot arrest a man unless he has broke ıe law."

"No, no, of course not; but I thought, in a confused 'ay, that the sight of a policeman might be a safeguard. ı man bent on a violent act would be afraid of him."

"Just so, miss, if he were sane; but as he isn't——)h, here's the house! Shall I come in with you, miss?"

"Oh yes, certainly."

"You keep yourself quiet, and don't be afraid," said ıe policeman encouragingly, for he perceived she was :embling with excitement.

He sprang out, and assisted Cara to alight.

"Drive on a few paces, coachee," he said, "but kee well within hail."

He would have liked to put his arm round th shivering girl, but refrained. "They'd think I was bring ing her back, drunk and incapable," he thought.

The entrance-door was not fastened, and a nigl porter was reading the newspaper by the light of a sma lamp. He looked up sleepily but interrogatively.

"I am going up to the fifth floor," said Cara calml for she felt she must be collected, "to Mr. Trevelyan rooms; he expects me."

Her refined air and tone of command affected th official, who called loudly: "Lift!" whereupon a ma who had been stretched on a bench in the backgroun roused himself up, and, with a huge yawn, led the wa to a short, wide passage from which the door of the li opened.

It seemed to Cara that she had hardly sat dow before they ceased to ascend, and she was stepping ou into a long, dimly-lighted corridor. The lift-conducto went before them to a door close by, and said audibl "Lady for you, sir." The next moment she was stanc ing face to face with Trevelyan, who was sitting at hi writing-table, which was at the opposite side of the roon He was too much surprised to move. The policema followed, and shut the door.

"You are amazed to see me," began Cara, hardl able to command her voice. "No wonder! Oh M Trevelyan, your life is in danger! Mr. Staunton ha

ıst now left the ball intending to murder you. He said s much, and there was murder in his eyes."

"Unlucky devil! He is capable of anything in his ›resent mood. Sit down, Miss Fitzalan. You can hardly tand. How infinitely good of you to take this trouble. Vhy, you seem quite faint!"

"The young lady is terribly frightened, sir," put in he guardian of the law.

Trevelyan hastily poured out a glass of iced water rom some which stood on a side table, and threw the vindow wider open.

"You no doubt exaggerate the danger. I do not hink Staunton would harm me if he were not quite oft ıis head. Did you bring this officer to protect me?" ıe added, with a caressing smile, which brought the :olour back to Cara's cheeks.

"Yes; I fancied that Jack Staunton would be afraid o kill you—— Oh! I hear steps! Someone is comng!"

"He must not find you here!" exclaimed Trevelyan. Ie hastily opened a door behind him. "This is an un:omfortable den; but you will be safe. Come!"

The door opened into a room so small as to be ittle more than a closet. It was surrounded with shelves, :hiefly filled with books, papers, miscellaneous curiosities rom distant lands, and an old deck-chair.

"Don't be alarmed if I lock the door. The moment : can release you with safety I will," said Trevelyan.

Cara gladly availed herself of this refuge. She had

hardly taken her seat, and heard the key turned and taken out of the lock, when the awfulness of her position came forcibly before her. She might hear the cruel sounds of a desperate struggle and murder at the end, and be helpless to aid; she might know that Trevelyan was breathing his last and yet be unable to catch his final look, to hear his dying words.

"God have mercy upon us!" she murmured, and continued to pray fervently though silently.

Meanwhile Trevelyan paused and listened.

"The steps have passed," he said, and resumed his seat. "Just stand there, if you please," to the policeman, "and should Staunton come in I shall seem noting down what you are telling me. I don't want to irritate him by seeming prepared. I——"

The door was dashed open, and Staunton entered. He had a light outside coat over his evening dress; his wild, dark eyes were ablaze with jealous fury. Trevelyan met them calmly. He did not stir from his place.

"This is a late visit, Staunton!" he said, and then slowly rose to his feet.

"Not too late for my purpose," cried the intruder, who did not seem to see the police-sergeant. "Not too late to punish a traitor—and a double-dyed traiter you are, Dick Trevelyan! I trusted you, I thought no man equal to you, I opened my heart to you, and you betrayed my confidence. You have won her heart; you stole the jewel of my life, the creature I lived for; but

you shall do no more mischief. Away with you to your master, the Devil!"

He drew a tiny pistol from his breast-pocket as he spoke, levelled it, and fired straight at Trevelyan. Quick as was his action the sergeant was quicker still, for, as Staunton drew the trigger, he struck up his hand. The ball passed over Trevelyan's head, and lodged in the frame of the door behind him. The wretched man flung the pistol from him and fled. The policeman followed. Terrified lest the ball might have pierced the panel of the door, for he did not exactly see where it had gone, and thought it might possibly have injured Miss Fitzalan, Trevelyan unlocked and opened the door to find her unhurt, but almost paralysed by the agony of waiting.

"Are you safe, are you wounded?" she whispered, clinging to him.

"Thanks to you, I am alive and well. I will not trust myself to speak to you now. I want you to go home and rest, and forget these horrors. Your police-sergeant has run away after Staunton. Come, I will see you home. Here, you must take some wine."

He took some sherry from the cellarette, and insisted upon her taking it. Then, having wrapped her cloak round her, and put on an overcoat, he drew her arm through his, and partly supported her to the lift.

Already everyone was looking out of their rooms and inquiring who had been killed. The man of the lift, now wide-awake, was much excited.

"You had a very narrow shave, sir. Why, nobody

knew that the ruffian went up by the stairs without saying a word; then down he clattered, calling out that the gentleman had shot himself, and he was going for the doctor, so got clear off into the dark, and two minutes after came the policeman in full chase."

"Call up this lady's carriage," said Trevelyan, who was eager to get Cara into the shelter of her home. "I must see you safely to your own abode," he added, as he assisted her into the brougham, and took his seat beside her.

"I earnestly hope that unfortunate man will not do himself any harm!" exclaimed Cara, after they had kept silence for awhile; the hearts of both were too full for speech, "or be hurt in resisting the police. Can he be proved insane, and put under restraint and proper care?"

"I hope so," said Trevelyan. "He ought not to be at large, though I doubt if he would hurt anyone but myself. Do you feel more composed, Miss Fitzalan, less faint?"

"Thank-you, yes!"

Another long silence, full of expression to both of them.

"You were so good as to make an appointment for me with Mrs. Bligh. Have you seen her since?"

"I have not!"

"And she does not rise early?"

"She does not leave her room till twelve, sometimes later."

"Then may I transfer the appointment to yourself?

have much to say, which I must not say now—not till ou are more yourself; and a story to tell you if you ill listen."

"I too have a long story to tell. It concerns Mr. taunton and myself."

"Indeed!" in a tone of surprise. "Then may I come t eleven to-morrow?"

"Certainly."

"Anyone sitting up for you?"

"One of Mrs. Bligh's servants generally does of her wn free will!"

"Try to sleep. Try not to think."

The carriage stopped, and Trevelyan saw her into he house and lit her candle.

"Good-night! Don't stand here! Get to your rest."

"I will, if you will let my hand go," she returned miling.

"What an idiot I am! Good-night! God bless you!"

. . . . . .

Contrary to her expectations Cara slept, and woke o bewilderment, until she roused herself to recall the vents of the past night. Then every other idea was ngulfed in the consciousness that Trevelyan was coming n a couple of hours to "tell her a story" and to hear ers. "Would he think her very unprincipled to have hammed death? What was *he* going to tell?"

Mrs. Bligh was feeling unwell, she said, and would ot leave her room till lunch-time, so Cara said nothing f her last night's terrible experience—that would keep.

She was somewhat discomfited on entering the dining-room to find her friend, Mrs. Harding, waiting for her.

"I'm an early bird, ain't I?" she exclaimed gaily. "I am on my way to a big lawyer, who considers me an important witness in a case which involves a lot of money, so I thought I would look in and see how you were. Do you know that horrid little paper, I forget the name—something about society—has got hold of your yacht adventure? It's too bad! You are looking awfully ill, Cara. You really ought to see some doctor and get a tonic."

"Oh! I am all right. I hope you will get some of the money, Susan!"

"Oh! not I——"

"Mr. Trevelyan," announced the servant.

"Then I must be off. I am behind time already. I wanted a word with you, and now I can't say it. Good-bye."

She ran downstairs, and Cara asked: "Where is Mr. Trevelyan?"

"In the drawing-room, miss."

Cara glanced at her hair and dress, a pretty lilac and white morning wrapper adorned with creamy lace. "How ill I look!" observing her pale, pathetic face, and the dark shade under her soft, earnest eyes.

Trevelyan was standing near the fireplace, his eyes fixed on the door, and looked very grave, even grim. He came forward, and, taking both her hands, looked at her in silence, his face softening as he looked,

"I have to thank you for life," he said, kissing the ands he held, then letting them go. "Life never seemed › precious to me before! Have you recovered from the ıock of last night?"

"I am quite myself, Mr. Trevelyan."

"You said you would listen to my story."

"Hear mine first!" she exclaimed, "then I will listen ; long as you like."

She sat down in a low chair. Trevelyan stood rest- ıg his hand on the top of another. Cara began at nce, sometimes looking up at her hearer, oftener avert- ıg her eyes. He grew quickly interested, and soon drew chair near the speaker. Cara was brief, only detail- ıg the leading facts. When she had finished Trevelyan ɔse, walked away to the window, and returned.

"My God!" he exclaimed, "what a life! What a estiny! Then that strange, mad fellow was right; you re his old sweetheart come back to him!"

"Was I very wicked to appear to have died in order › escape from so dreadful a life?"

"No! It is too awful to think of all you have es- aped, and that you should be a gentlewoman in spite of verything! Amazing! Now, will you hear my tale?"

He told briefly of his wild, foolish, reckless youth, is flight as a broken, penniless man to the wilds of .frica, of his meeting with Staunton, and his recognition f Cara at the Regent's Theatre.

"Now," continued Trevelyan, "I have reached the risis of my life. Up to this time I had had many pass-

ing fancies, like other men, but I was never very much attracted or influenced by women. About this time I met a woman, for, young as she was, I will not apply the term girl to the rich womanliness of her nature. She was not beautiful, but the grace and charm of her personality entered into my soul and dwelt there. She was —nay, is—absolutely real, unaffected, and deliciously natural. Her voice was music—at least to me—and the strongest possible sympathy, the most interesting difference of views developed between us. I felt—well, as I had never felt before. But I dared not give myself up to this enchantment, for I am poor and struggling; she was well off, accustomed to luxury, and would probably, later on, be still richer. I have struggled against this infatuation. I did not dare to show her my heart."

He stopped abruptly.

Cara listened with a beating pulse and changing colour.

"Now," he went on rapidly, with increasing zest, "by her courage and promptitude she has saved my life. Perhaps there is some hope for me. Cara, you must have known long since that I loved you, though I dared not say so!"

Cara had risen to her feet, and stood with her clasped hands dropped before her.

"Why?" she asked, a sunny smile lighting up her face.

"I had so little to offer you, and your career promised so much profit, so much success. I speak now because I can no longer keep silent. Tell me, my darling, could

you feel something of the love you have inspired? My heart aches for you."

Cara covered her eyes with one hand, and stretched out the other to Trevelyan. She was dazed, tremulous with the strange delight his words, his impassioned tone created. The next instant she was in his arms, strained to his heart.

"You will venture then to share your life with me?"

"You know all mine now! Are *you* content to take me into yours?" was her counter-question.

A long, rapturous kiss—his reply.

"I have but a very humble beginning to offer you, darling!" he said, when they came to themselves, after a moment or two of bewildering joy, "but I think the future is full of hope, and I shall do better work when I know you are my own—when I have you always near me!"

"Listen to me," said Cara, with sweet gravity, as she seated herself on the sofa, and Trevelyan took his place beside her. "I know you do not like me to act."

"Well, no! It is a crooked, jealous feeling. I hate her people—every creature that can pay for a place—to gaze upon you. I want you absolutely for myself."

"I am quite willing to give up the stage, only, at first, I should like to be a help to you, and I cannot retire until I have repaid Mrs. Bligh. You know she educated and trained me on the understanding that she was to pay herself from my earnings."

"We shall come to some understanding with her about that!" said Trevelyan, stealing her hand to hold in

both his own. "Let us not delay the happiness of complete union a moment longer than is absolutely necessary."

"Mrs. Bligh is a good deal changed," returned Cara. "She used to be so eager for money; she has not troubled about it so much of late. But she must be paid."

"Yes, of course. It seems to me, now that we understand each other, and are pledged to each other, all things are possible. May I speak to Mrs. Bligh to-day?"

"No, no. Let me tell her first."

The further babble of a pair of lovers may be left unrecorded.

CHAPTER XXVI.

MEANTIME, the police were several hours searching in all directions before they could get any clue to the missing Staunton; even the night porter could not tell which way he had turned after he had fled from the house. As the driver of Miss Fitzalan's brougham was quite sure that no gentleman had run past him, they decided he must have gone the other way.

Before Trevelyan had started to keep his appointment with Cara, the constable who accompanied her the previous night had called to report progress and ask counsel. Trevelyan felt pretty sure that the unfortunate man had made for Southampton, and would put out to sea as soon as possible.

This proved to have been the case.

Mrs. Bligh, to Cara's surprise, seemed quite prepared for the announcement of Trevelyan's offer.

"Poor fellow! He fought a pretty hard battle with himself before he gave in," said Mrs. Bligh, reflectively. "I like him, but he has no money. However, it's no great matter, after all. Only, how are you going to pay me, child?"

"I do not want to marry till I have paid you," said Cara, still wondering at the mildness of her tone.

"Trevelyan would never agree to that," shaking her head. "I suppose he is coming to speak to me?"

"He wished to do so this morning, Mrs. Bligh."

"That is too quick. Let him wait till the day after to-morrow. I wish you hadn't been in such a hurry to say 'Yes'; though, after all, I have no right to interfere. Marriages are in the air just at present. Give me that paper. Listen to this:—

"'A marriage has been arranged between Captain Algernon Herbert, late of the 17th Hussars, and Lady Sarah Chillingham, only daughter of the late Earl of Chessington, and will probably take place early in September.'

Now, here's another:

"'On the 15th instant, at St. Stephen's Church, Kensington, Sir Ferdinand Lorrimer, of the Beeches, Richmond, to Jane ("Miss Delamere"), widow of Philip Kemp, late of Bucklersbury."

That man is a downright idiot! I remember him ten or twelve years ago. He was always busy making a fool of himself. However, he found a still greater one—a rich widow, who bequeathed him all she had—and so made him worthy of Miss Delamere's wiles. Horrid woman! Nothing will persuade me that she was not paid by Staunton for staying at home that day instead of going on board the yacht."

"I cannot believe it."

"Oh, no matter! I feel as if great changes are going to take place. I feel very low; my back aches. Bring me my writing things; I will send a line to Trevelyan. He may come and sup here to-morrow, not to-night. You

ıust be mistress of yourself, and do me credit. So Mrs. Iarding was here this morning. I wonder why?"

"She has been away for a couple of days, and just an in to see how we were."

Here Marie entered with a letter, a large envelope, dorned with a coronet over the initials.

"It is for me!" said Cara, opening it, "and from Lord Ellersdale."

"What does it say?"

Cara read:—

"'DEAR MISS FITZALAN.—Is twelve o'clock to-morrow morn-ıg too early an appointment for you? You would do me a great ıvour by coming here at that hour. My messenger will wait your ply.'"

"What an hour!" cried Mrs. Bligh. "But you must o, Carry. Perhaps he is going to make his will in your ıvour, or settle a big sum on you. I am told he has eaps of personal property he can dispose of as he likes."

"Of course I shall keep the appointment whatever its bject," cried Cara, going to the writing-table to indite er reply. "I do wonder what he wants me for!"

The answer despatched, Cara's thoughts soon flew ıack to her interview with Trevelyan, to the delicious, lorious idea that she had been dear to him all the time. She had resisted her own growing affection, and shrank rom the sense of humiliation at having bestowed her ove where it was unsought. Now the whole world was ıers. Nothing was left to wish for; the future was all unshine and security. Only she wanted to see him. It

was but dim twilight, even at noonday, when he was away. Of course she would renounce her profession if he wished it. What was the applause, the adulation of the whole world, compared to Trevelyan's approbation?

In the afternoon Mrs. Bligh insisted on Cara's lying down to rest. Then sleep stole over her, and she woke refreshed and equal to the work of the evening.

Trevelyan met her at the stage-door when the play was over, and accompanied her home.

"Mrs. Bligh seems anxious to defer the doubtful pleasure of seeing me," he said smiling. "But she cannot do so long, and then I feel sure we shall come to some arrangement respecting this little slavey!" pressing her to his side. "I shall know no peace till I have the right to watch over you night and day. The police have followed Staunton to Southampton, and we shall know the result to-morrow. I begin to agree with you that he is insane."

Then Cara confided to him Lord Ellersdale's request that she would call on him the following morning, and he mused upon the matter for a moment or two.

"He is a curious old fellow. Very high bred, very worldly, but chivalrous in a way. He seems to have taken a great fancy to you. It suggests —— Never mind now what it suggests, I'll tell you another time," and the conversation ceased to be worth repeating.

It was a little after the time appointed when Cara reached the Ellersdale mansion. Mrs. Bligh had been very particular as to her *protégée's* toilet, and attended to all the details herself.

"You will come straight back to me as soon as you have heard all Lord Ellersdale has to say?" were her parting words, and Cara smilingly replied, "Of course."

Cara found the old peer in his private sitting-room, looking, she thought, worn, ill, and more like a death's-head than ever.

"I am a little late, I fear," she said, as soon as they had exchanged greetings.

"My dear young lady, you are very punctual for a young lady," and she felt how keenly he scrutinised her as he spoke. Then came a brief silence, during which Cara felt that Lord Ellersdale did not quite know how to begin. "I wish to tell you something of my own life," he began at last. "Why, you will discover as I go on." Again a pause, and he resumed: "I was one of three brothers. The oldest, Geoffrey, succeeded our father, married a rich woman, cleared the estates, survived his wife, nursed the estate, and died childless. I then became Lord Ellersdale. My younger brother was poor, idle, careless, without ambition. Indifferent health might partly account for these failings. I had a sister also. Algy Herbert is her grandson. My younger brother, Alberic, died while comparatively young, leaving one son, who was fatally like him. He was in the army, but extravagant, weak, hopeless. I paid his debts twice, and then I washed my hands of him—perhaps none too soon. He married a gentlewoman—poor, foolish creature! —Irish, I believe—and dragged her through the gutter. Fortunately for herself she died while still young, leaving

an unhappy little girl. Her boy had been taken before her, and that girl is—" he paused, laid his almost transparent, thin, aristocratic-looking hand on hers kindly —"that poor, neglected, injured little girl is—yourself!"

In immense astonisment Cara started up.

"Me *your* niece! It is impossible!"

"It is true, my dear child. You stand in the same degree to me as Algy Herbert. You are my grand-niece, but in the male line. Had your father outlived me, he would have stepped into my place without a question. So Ellersdale Abbey and all the estates will pass to you, and the title becomes extinct. I like you, child. You remind me of my beloved mother; but I should prefer Algy to be my heir. The title might have been revived for him; but your rights are sacred in my mind. A couple of years ago I heard of your father's *mésalliance,* and made search for you. Then I heard you had perished by fire. Your likeness to my mother awoke my curiosity. Mrs. Bligh's revelations, the miniature of your father, which I recognised, roused my dormant sense of duty. I put the matter into my lawyer's hand. He traced your story from your birth at Tours to what seemed your extinction in the fire. The evidence of Mrs. Bligh's cook, Marie, and your friend, Mrs. Harding, the account of that wretched madman's delusion, all point to your identity as my grand-niece and heiress."

"Oh, how dreadfully disappointed Captain Herbert will be. Need you give me everything, dear Lord Ellersdale? I do not want so much."

"It is the law, not I, that confers the lands of Ellersdale on you. But I have some consolation left for Algy. I wish you and he would make a match of it, and unite the two lines."

"Ah! dear Lord Ellersdale, that is out of the question. I—I have promised to marry another person."

"My God! Not an actor?"

"Oh, no," laughing and blushing delightfully. "The gentleman is—Mr. Trevelyan."

"Dick Trevelyan? Ah, *he* is all right. *He* is a gentleman, and comes of a good stock. Now, my dear child, lose no time. Get rid of your engagements; retire from the stage. I will pay any reasonable forfeit. You must live with me. You must be married from your future home; and remember, the rights so strangely restored to you entail many serious duties. Life, even for those who are born to wealth and lofty station, is *not* all *méringues* and champagne. I am dreadfully tired, my dear. Ring for Morris. I can say no more now, but I must see Trevelyan. You might do worse than marry Trevelyan. He is a clever fellow, and may do us credit in Parliament yet. Now leave me, I am exhausted." Then, as Cara, with smiles and tears, took and kissed his hand, he murmured: "My God! how like! how like!" and fell back in his chair.

. . . . .

"Am I to believe my senses?" cried Cara to Mrs. Bligh, when she returned to that lady. "It is like a fairy-tale; and my kind, good friend, *you* are the fairy

godmother. I feel dizzy and half-frightened. Is it—is it all true?"

"Truth is, by many degrees, stranger than fiction. I don't wonder that your head is turned; mine feels like it, and I am sad into the bargain, for I have lost you, and you made me human again, as I was hardening into a gluttonous, money-grubbing, adamantine hag."

"Lost me? No, Mrs. Bligh. Am I of the ungrateful, worthless sort? I shall always cherish you as——"

"Yes, you intend it now, and you will, in a way, for you have a sound heart, Carry. But I was mistress of the position, now I sink to a mere walking lady."

"Not with me. But you do not seem much surprised?"

"Well, no. This discovery was not made in a day. Do you remember entrusting me—very reluctantly—with the portraits of your father and mother? It was to show them to Lord Ellersdale, not to a miniature fancier. Then Marie, whose notice of your likeness to the English lady at Tours struck me, recognised your mother's picture, and made another link in the chain of evidence. Come, we must not waste time. I will write to Bellamy. You cannot go on acting, so you must give him time to replace you. Isn't it a mercy Trevelyan proved himself a good man and true before you were proved heiress of Ellersdale Abbey and the demesnes that there adjacent lie. You are in luck all round, and may you enjoy it, for you have been a dear daughter to me."

So this "ower true tale" is ended. The intelligent reader can imagine the remaining details for himself.

The ecstasy and excitement of Susan, who persuaded her husband to postpone their return home in order to be present at Cara's quiet wedding. The bewilderment of Trevelyan on finding that the girl he loved so tenderly was the daughter of Arthur Ascott Leigh, of whose delinquencies and degradation he had heard.

"Had I any idea that your real name was Leigh, my darling," he said, "this great discovery might have taken place sooner, for Lord Ellersdale often talked of your likeness to his mother, and as the family name is Leigh, it might have given him a clue."

Amid so much excitement, the unfortunate Staunton was temporarily forgotten till about a fortnight after his disappearance, when the master of his yacht presented himself at Mr. Hammond's office, and told this tale to that gentleman:—

Very early one morning Mr. Staunton came on board the yacht, then at Southampton, and gave orders that they should sail as soon as possible. They stood out to sea, and with a favourable breeze reached the Land's End rapidly; then the wind changed. They beat about for a day or two, and one morning the steward went, as usual, to set the breakfast, feeling surprised not to see his master about. They sought him in every corner of the ship in vain. Alone with his own wild, tangled thoughts, bereft of reason's rule, in his grief, remorse,

despair, he sought refuge in the sea he loved so w
from life which had no longer a hope or an object.

. . . . .

"It is a lovely scene," said Cara to her husband c
fine, soft spring evening, as they stood together gaz
out over the wide stretch of country visible from t
summer-house at Ellersdale, described in an earlier sta
of this story. "What a sweet home we have!"

"Yes," returned Trevelyan. "Thank God we h
secured those jewels, love and trust, before we fou
this lovely sanctuary to enshrine them in."

"Amen," she added, creeping close to his side.

THE END.

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Love-Letters of a Worldly Woman 1 v. — Aunt Anne 2 v. — The Last Touches, and other Stories 1 v. — Mrs. Keith's Crime 1 v. — A Wild Proxy 1 v. — A Flash of Summer 1 v.

Mrs. Caroline Clive, † 1873, *vide* Author of "Paul Ferroll."

Frances Power Cobbe.

Re-Echoes 1 v.

C. R. Coleridge.

An English Squire 2 v.

M. E. Coleridge.

The King with two Faces 2 v.

Samuel Taylor Coleridge, † 1834.

Poems 1 v.

Charles Allston Collins, † 1873.

A Cruise upon Wheels 2 v.

Mortimer Collins, † 1876.

Sweet and Twenty 2 v. — A Fight with Fortune 2 v.

Wilkie Collins, † 1889.

After Dark 1 v. — Hide and Seek 2 v. — *A Plot in* Private Life, etc. 1 v. — The *Woman in* White 2 v. — Basil 1 v. — No *Name* 3 v. — The Dead Secret, and other Tales 2 v. — Antonina 2 v. — Armadale 3 v. — The Moonstone 2 v. — Man and Wife 3 v. — Poor Miss Finch 2 v. — Miss or Mrs.? 1 v. — The New Magdalen 2 v. — The Frozen Deep 1 v. — The Law and the Lady 2 v. — The Two Destinies 1 v. — My Lady's Money, and Percy and the Prophet 1 v. — The Haunted Hotel 1 v. — The Fallen Leaves 2 v. — Jezebel's Daughter 2 v. — The Black Robe 2 v. — Heart and Science 2 v. — "I say No," 2 v. — The Evil Genius 2 v. — The Guilty River, and The Ghost's Touch 1 v. — The Legacy of Cain 2 v. — Blind Love 2 v.

Author of "Cometh up as a Flower," *vide* Rhoda Broughton.

Joseph Conrad.

An Outcast of the Islands 2 v. — Tales of Unrest 1 v.

Hugh Conway (F. J. Fargus), † 1885.

Called Back 1 v. — Bound Together 2 v. — Dark Days 1 v. — A Family Affair 2 v. — Living or Dead 2 v.

James Fenimore Cooper (Am.), † 1851.

The Spy (with Portrait) 1 v. — The Two Admirals 1 v. — The Jack O'Lantern 1 v.

Mrs. Cooper, *vide* Katharine Saunders.

Marie Corelli.

Vendetta! 2 v. — Thelma 2 v. — A Romance of Two Worlds 2 v. — "Ardath" 3 v. — Wormwood. A Drama of Paris 2 v. — The Hired Baby, with other Stories and Social Sketches 1 v. — Barabbas; A Dream of the World's Tragedy 2 v. — The Sorrows of Satan 2 v. — The Mighty Atom 1 v. — The Murder of Delicia 1 v. — Ziska 1 v. — Boy. A Sketch. 2 v. — The Master-Christian 2 v.

Author of "The County."

The County 1 v.

George Lillie Craik, † 1866.

A Manual of English Literature and of the History of the English Language 2 v.

Mrs. Craik (Miss Dinah M. Mulock), † 1887.

John Halifax, Gentleman 2 v. — The Head of the Family 2 v. — A Life for a Life 2 v. — A Woman's Thoughts about Women 1 v. — Agatha's Husband 1 v. — Romantic Tales 1 v. — Domestic Stories 1 v. — Mistress and Maid 1 v. — The Ogilvies 1 v. — Lord Erlistoun 1 v. —

Christian's Mistake 1 v. — Bread upon the Waters 1 v. — A Noble Life 1 v. — Olive 2 v. — Two Marriages 1 v. — Studies from Life 1 v. — Poems 1 v. — The Woman's Kingdom 2 v. — The Unkind Word, and other Stories 2 v. — A Brave Lady 2 v. — Hannah 2 v. — Fair France 1 v. — My Mother and I 1 v. — The Little Lame Prince 1 v. — Sermons out of Church 1 v. — The Laurel-Bush; Two little Tinkers 1 v. — A Legacy 2 v. — Young Mrs. Jardine 2 v. — His Little Mother, and other Tales and Sketches 1 v. — Plain Speaking 1 v. — Miss Tommy 1 v. — King Arthur 1 v.

Georgiana M. Craik (Mrs. May).

Lost and Won 1 v. — Faith Unwin's Ordeal 1 v. — Leslie Tyrrell 1 v. — Winifred's Wooing, etc. 1 v. — Mildred 1 v. — Esther Hill's Secret 2 v. — Hero Trevelyan 1 v. — Without Kith or Kin 2 v. — Only a Butterfly 1 v. — Sylvia's Choice; Theresa 2 v. — Anne Warwick 1 v. — Dorcas 2 v. — Two Women 2 v.

Georgiana M. Craik & M. C. Stirling.

Two Tales of Married Life (Hard to Bear, by Miss Craik; A True Man, by M. C. Stirling) 2 v.

Mrs. Augustus Craven, *vide* **Lady Fullerton.**

F. Marion Crawford (Am.).

Mr. Isaacs 1 v. — Doctor Claudius 1 v. — To Leeward 1 v. — A Roman Singer 1 v. — An American Politician 1 v. — Zoroaster 1 v. — A Tale of a Lonely Parish 2 v. — Saracinesca 2 v. — Marzio's Crucifix 1 v. — Paul Patoff 2 v. — With the Immortals 1 v. — Greifenstein 2 v. — Sant' Ilario 2 v. — A Cigarette-Maker's Romance 1 v. — Khaled 1 v. — The Witch of Prague 2 v. — The Three Fates 2 v. — Don Orsino 2 v. — The Children of the King 1 v. — Pietro Ghisleri 2 v. — Marion Darche 1 v. — Katharine Lauderdale 2 v. — The Ralstons 2 v. — Casa Braccio 2 v. — Adam Johnstone's Son 1 v. — Taquisara 2 v. — A Rose of Yesterday 1 v. — Corleone 2 v. — Via Crucis 2 v. — In the Palace of the King 2 v.

S. R. Crockett.

The Raiders 2 v. — Cleg Kelly 2 v. — The Grey Man 2 v.

J. W. Cross, *vide* **George Eliot's Life.**

Mrs. Pender Cudlip, *vide* **A. Thomas.**

Miss Cummins (Am.), † 1866.

The Lamplighter 1 v. — Mabel Vaughan 1 v. — El Fureidis 1 v. — Haunted Hearts 1 v.

Paul Cushing.

The Blacksmith of Voe 2 v.

"Daily News."

War Correspondence, 1877, by Archibald Forbes and others 3 v.

Author of "Dark."

Dark 1 v.

Richard Harding Davis (Am.).

Gallegher, etc. 1 v. — Van Bibber and Others 1 v.

Daniel De Foe, † 1731.

Robinson Crusoe 1 v.

Margaret Deland (Am.).

John Ward, Preacher 1 v.

Author of "Democracy" (Am.).

Democracy 1 v.

Author of "Demos," *vide* **George Gissing.**

Author of "Diary and Notes," *vide* **Author of "Horace Templeton."**

Charles Dickens, † 1870.

The Pickwick Club (with Portrait) 2 v. — American Notes 1 v. — Oliver Twist 1 v. — Nicholas Nickleby 2 v. — Sketches 1 v. — Martin Chuzzlewit 2 v. — A Christmas Carol; The Chimes; The Cricket on the Hearth 1 v. — Master Humphrey's Clock (Old Curiosity Shop; Barnaby Rudge, etc.) 3 v. — Pictures from Italy 1 v. — Dombey and Son 3 v. — David Copperfield 3 v. — Bleak House 4 v. — A Child's History of England (2 v. 8° M. 2,70.) — Hard Times 1 v. — Little Dorrit (with Illustrations) 4 v. — The Battle of Life; The Haunted Man 1 v. — A Tale of two Cities 2 v. — Hunted Down; The Uncommercial Traveller 1 v. — Great Expectations 2 v. — Christmas Stories, etc. 1 v. — Our Mutual Friend (with Illustrations) 4 v. — Somebody's Luggage; Mrs. Lirriper's Lodgings; Mrs. Lirriper's Legacy 1 v. — Doctor Marigold's Prescriptions; Mugby Junction 1 v. — The Mystery of Edwin Drood (with Illustrations) 2 v. — The Mudfog Papers, 1 v. — The Letters of Charles Dickens, ed. by his Sister-in-law and his eldest Daughter 4 v. — *Vide* also Household Words, Novels and Tales, and John Forster.

Charles Dickens & Wilkie Collins.
No Thoroughfare; The Late Miss Hollingford 1 v.

Benjamin Disraeli, Lord Beaconsfield, † 1881.
Coningsby 1 v. — Sybil 1 v. — Contarini Fleming (with Portrait) 1 v. — Alroy 1 v. — Tancred 2 v. — Venetia 2 v. — Vivian Grey 2 v. — Henrietta Temple 1 v. — Lothair 2 v. — Endymion 2 v.

Ella Hepworth Dixon.
The Story of a Modern Woman 1 v.

W. Hepworth Dixon, † 1879.
Personal History of Lord Bacon 1 v. — The Holy Land 2 v. — New America 2 v. — Spiritual Wives 2 v. — Her Majesty's Tower 4 v. — Free Russia 2 v. — History of two Queens 6 v. — White Conquest 2 v. — Diana, Lady Lyle 2 v.

L. Dougall (Am.).
Beggars All 2 v.

Ménie Muriel Dowie.
A Girl in the Karpathians 1 v.

A. Conan Doyle.
The Sign of Four 1 v. — Micah Clarke 2 v. — The Captain of the Pole-Star, and other Tales 1 v. — The White Company 2 v. — A Study in Scarlet 1 v. — The Great Shadow, and Beyond the City 1 v. — The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes 2 v. — The Refugees 2 v. — The Firm of Girdlestone 2 v. — The Memoirs of Sherlock Holmes 2 v. — Round the Red Lamp 1 v. — The Stark Munro Letters 1 v. — The Exploits of Brigadier Gerard 1 v. — Rodney Stone 2 v. — Uncle Bernac 1 v. — The Tragedy of the Korosko 1 v. — A Duet 1 v. — The Green Flag 1 v. — The Great Boer War 2 v.

Professor Henry Drummond, † 1897.
The Greatest Thing in the World; Pax Vobiscum; The Changed Life 1 v.

Dunton, *vide* **Th. Watts-Dunton.**

The Earl and the Doctor.
South Sea Bubbles 1 v.

The Earl of Dufferin.
Letters from High Latitudes 1 v.

Edward B. Eastwick, † 1883.
Autobiography of Lutfullah 1 v.

***Maria* Edgeworth,** *vide* Series for the Young, p. 29.

Mrs. Annie Edwardes.
Archie Lovell 2 v. — Steven Lawrence, Yeoman 2 v. — Ought we to visit her? 2 v. — A Vagabond Heroine 1 v. — Leah: A Woman of Fashion 2 v. — A Blue-Stocking 1 v. — Jet: Her Face or Her Fortune? 1 v. — Vivian the Beauty 1 v. — A Ball-room Repentance 2 v. — A Girton Girl 2 v. — A Playwright's Daughter, and Bertie Griffiths 1 v. — Pearl-Powder 1 v. The Adventuress 1 v.

Amelia B. Edwards, † 1892.
Barbara's History 2 v. — Miss Carew 2 v. — Hand and Glove 1 v. — Half a Million of Money 2 v. — Debenham's Vow 2 v. — In the Days of my Youth 2 v. — Untrodden Peaks and Unfrequented Valleys 1 v. — Monsieur Maurice 1 v. — A Night on the Borders of the Black Forest 1 v. — A Poetry-Book of Elder Poets 1 v. — A Thousand Miles up the Nile 2 v. — A Poetry-Book of Modern Poets 1 v. — Lord Brackenbury 2 v.

M. Betham-Edwards, *v.* Betham.

Edward Eggleston (Am.).
The Faith Doctor 2 v.

Barbara Elbon (Am.).
Bethesda 2 v.

George Eliot (Miss Evans — Mrs. Cross), † 1880.
Scenes of Clerical Life 2 v. — Adam Bede 2 v. — The Mill on the Floss 2 v. — Silas Marner 1 v. — Romola 2 v. — Felix Holt 2 v. — Daniel Deronda 4 v. — The Lifted Veil, and Brother Jacob 1 v. — Impressions of Theophrastus Such 1 v. — Essays and Leaves from a Note-Book 1 v. — George Eliot's Life, edited by her Husband, J. W. Cross 4 v.

Author of "Elizabeth and her German Garden."
Elizabeth and her German Garden 1 v. — The Solitary Summer 1 v.

Mrs. Frances Elliot, † 1898.
Diary of an Idle Woman in Italy 2 v. — Old Court Life in France 2 v. — The Italians 2 v. — The Diary of an Idle Woman in Sicily 1 v. — Pictures of Old Rome 1 v. — The Diary of an Idle Woman in Spain 2 v. — The Red Cardinal 1 v. — The Story of Sophia 1 v. — Diary of an Idle Woman in Constantinople 1 v. — Old Court Life in Spain 2 v. — Roman Gossip 1 v.

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shwoman's Love-Letters 1 v.

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d Reviews. By various Authors

of "Estelle Russell."
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Horatia Ewing, † 1885.
ıes; The Story of a Short Life; rwin's Dovecot 1 v. — A Flat Farthing 1 v. — The Brownies, Tales 1 v.

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ırge Fleming (Am.).
ı v. — Andromeda 2 v.

Archibald Forbes, † 1900.
My Experiences of the War between France and Germany 2 v. — Soldiering and Scribbling 1 v. — Memories and Studies of War and Peace 2 v. — *Vide* also "Daily News," War Correspondence.

R. E. Forrest.
Eight Days 2 v.

Mrs. Forrester.
Viva 2 v. — Rhona 2 v. — Roy and Viola 2 v. — My Lord and My Lady 2 v. — I have Lived and Loved 2 v. — June 2 v. — Omnia Vanitas 1 v. — Although he was a Lord, and other Tales 1 v. — Corisande, and other Tales 1 v. — Once Again 2 v. — Of the World, Worldly 1 v. — Dearest 2 v. — The Light of other Days 1 v. — Too Late Repented 1 v.

John Forster, † 1876.
The Life of Charles Dickens (with Illustrations and Portraits) 6 v. — Life and Times of Oliver Goldsmith 2 v.

Jessie Fothergill.
The First Violin 2 v. — Probation 2 v. — Made or Marred, and "One of Three" 1 v. — Kith and Kin 2 v. — Peril 2 v. — Borderland 2 v.

Author of "Found Dead," *vide* James Payn.

Ellen Thorneycroft Fowler.
A Double Thread 2 v. — The Farringdons 2 v.

Caroline Fox, † 1871.
Memories of Old Friends from her Journals and Letters, edited by Horace N. Pym 2 v.

Author of "Frank Fairlegh" (F. E. Smedley), † 1864.
Frank Fairlegh 2 v.

M. E. Francis.
The Duenna of a Genius 1 v.

Harold Frederic (Am.), † 1898.
Illumination 2 v. — March Hares 1 v.

Edward A. Freeman, † 1892.
The Growth of the English Constitution 1 v. — Select Historical Essays 1 v. — Sketches from French Travel 1 v.

James Anthony Froude, † 1894.
Oceana 1 v. — The Spanish Story of the Armada, and other Essays 1 v.

Lady Georgiana Fullerton, † 1885.
Ellen Middleton 1 v. — Grantley Manor 2 v. — Lady Bird 2 v. — Too Strange not to be True 2 v. — Constance Sherwood 2 v. — A Stormy Life 2 v. — Mrs. Geralds' Niece 2 v. — The Notary's Daughter 1 v. — The Lilies of the Valley, and The House of Penarvan 1 v. — The Countess de Bonneval 1 v. — Rose Leblanc 1 v. — Seven Stories 1 v. — The Life of Luisa de Carvajal 1 v. — A Will and a Way, and The Handkerchief at the Window 2 v. — Eliane 2 v. (by Mrs. Augustus Craven, translated by Lady Fullerton). — Laurentia 1 v.

Marguerite Gardiner, *vide* Lady Blessington.

Mrs. Gaskell, † 1865.
Mary Barton 1 v. — Ruth 2 v. — North and South 1 v. — Lizzie Leigh, and other Tales 1 v. — The Life of Charlotte Brontë 2 v. — Lois the Witch, etc. 1 v. — Sylvia's Lovers 2 v. — A Dark Night's Work 1 v. — Wives and Daughters 3 v. — Cranford 1 v. — Cousin Phillis, and other Tales 1 v.

Author of "Geraldine Hawthorne," *vide* Author of "Miss Molly."

Dorothea Gerard (Madame de Longard).
Lady Baby 2 v. — Recha 1 v. — Orthodox 1 v. — The Wrong Man 1 v. — A Spotless Reputation 1 v. — A Forgotten Sin 1 v. — One Year 1 v. — The Supreme Crime 1 v.

E. Gerard (Madame de Laszowska).
A Secret Mission 1 v. — A Foreigner 2 v.

Agnes Giberne.
The Curate's Home 1 v.

George Gissing.
Demos. A Story of English Socialism 2 v. — New Grub Street 2 v.

Rt. Hon. W. E. Gladstone, † 1898.
Rome and the Newest Fashions in Religion 1 v. — Bulgarian Horrors, and Russia in Turkistan, with other Tracts 1 v. — The Hellenic Factor in the Eastern Problem, with other Tracts 1 v.

Elinor Glyn.
The Visits of Elizabeth 1 v.

***Hal* Godfrey (Charlotte O'Conor-Eccles).**
Rejuvenation of Miss Semaphore 1 v.

Oliver Goldsmith, † 1774.
Select Works (with Portrait) 1 v.

Edward J. Goodman.
Too Curious 1 v.

Julien Gordon (Am.).
A Diplomat's Diary 1 v.

Major-Gen. C. G. Gordon, † 1885.
His Journals at Kartoum. Introduction and Notes by A. E. Hake (with eighteen Illustrations) 2 v.

Mrs. Gore, † 1861.
Castles in the Air 1 v. — The Dean's Daughter 2 v. — Progress and Prejudice 2 v. — Mammon 2 v. — A Life's Lessons 2 v. — The Two Aristocracies 2 v. — Heckington 2 v.

Sarah Grand.
Our Manifold Nature 1 v. — Babs the Impossible 2 v.

Miss Grant.
Victor Lescar 2 v. — The Sun-Maid 2 v. — My Heart's in the Highlands 2 v. — Artiste 2 v. — Prince Hugo 2 v. — Cara Roma 2 v.

Maxwell Gray.
The Silence of Dean Maitland 2 v. — The Reproach of Annesley 2 v.

E. C. Grenville: Murray (Trois-Etoiles), † 1881.
The Member for Paris 2 v. — Young Brown 2 v. — The Boudoir Cabal 3 v. — French Pictures in English Chalk *(First Series)* 2 v. — The Russians of To-day 1 v. — French Pictures in English Chalk *(Second Series)* 2 v. — Strange Tales 1 v. — That Artful Vicar 2 v. — Six Months in the Ranks 1 v. — People I have met 1 v.

Ethel St. Clair Grimwood.
My Three Years in Manipur (with Portrait) 1 v.

W. A. Baillie Grohman.
Tyrol and the Tyrolese 1 v.

Archibald Clavering Gunter (Am.).
Mr. Barnes of New York 1 v.

F. Anstey Guthrie, *vide* Anstey.

Author of "Guy Livingstone" (George Alfred Laurence), † 1876.
Guy Livingstone 1 v. — Sword and Gown 1 v. — Barren Honour 1 v. — Border and Bastille 1 v. — Maurice Dering 1 v. — Sans Merci 2 v. — Breaking a Butterfly 2 v. — Anteros 2 v. — Hagarene 2 v.

John Habberton (Am.).

Helen's Babies & Other People's Children 1 v. — The Bowsham Puzzle 1 v. — One Tramp; Mrs. Mayburn's Twins 1 v.

H. Rider Haggard.

King Solomon's Mines 1 v. — She 2 v. — Jess 2 v. — Allan Quatermain 2 v. — The Witch's Head 2 v. — Maiwa's Revenge 1 v. — Mr. Meeson's Will 1 v. — Colonel Quaritch, V. C. 2 v. — Cleopatra 2 v. — Allan's Wife 1 v. — Beatrice 2 v. — Dawn 2 v. — Montezuma's Daughter 2 v. — The People of the Mist 2 v. — Joan Haste 2 v. — Heart of the World 2 v. — The Wizard 1 v. — Doctor Therne 1 v. — Swallow 2 v. — Black Heart and White Heart, and Elissa 1 v. — Lysbeth 2 v.

H. Rider Haggard & Andrew Lang.

The World's Desire 2 v.

A. E. Hake, *vide* Gen. Gordon.

Mrs. S. C. Hall, † 1881.

Can Wrong be Right? 1 v. — Marian 2 v.

Philip Gilbert Hamerton, † 1894.

Marmorne 1 v. — French and English 2 v.

Miss Iza Hardy, *vide* Author of "Not Easily Jealous."

Thomas Hardy.

The Hand of Ethelberta 2 v. — Far from the Madding Crowd 2 v. — The Return of the Native 2 v. — The Trumpet-Major 2 v. — A Laodicean 2 v. — Two on a Tower 2 v. — A Pair of Blue Eyes 2 v. — A Group of Noble Dames 1 v. — Tess of the D'Urbervilles 2 v. — Life's Little Ironies 1 v. — Jude the Obscure 2 v.

Beatrice Harraden.

Ships that pass in the Night 1 v. — In Varying Moods 1 v. — Hilda Strafford, and The Remittance Man 1 v. — The Fowler 2 v.

Agnes Harrison.

Martin's Vineyard 1 v.

Bret Harte (Am.).

Prose and Poetry (Tales of the Argonauts: — The Luck of Roaring Camp; The Outcasts of Poker Flat, etc. — Spanish and American Legends; Condensed Novels; Civic and Character Sketches; Poems) 2 v. — Idyls of the Foothills 1 v. — Gabriel Conroy 2 v. — Two Men of Sandy Bar 1 v. — Thankful Blossom, and other Tales 1 v. — The Story of a Mine 1 v. — Drift from Two Shores 1 v. — An Heiress of Red Dog, and other Sketches 1 v. — The Twins of Table Mountain, and other Tales 1 v. — Jeff Briggs's Love Story, and other Tales 1 v. — Flip, and other Stories 1 v. — On the Frontier 1 v. — By Shore and Sedge 1 v. — Maruja 1 v. — Snow-bound at Eagle's, and Devil's Ford 1 v. — The Crusade of the "Excelsior" 1 v. — A Millionaire of Rough-and-Ready, and other Tales 1 v. — Captain Jim's Friend, and the Argonauts of North Liberty 1 v. — Cressy 1 v. — The Heritage of Dedlow Marsh, and other Tales 1 v. — A Waif of the Plains 1 v. — A Ward of the Golden Gate 1 v. — A Sappho of Green Springs, and other Tales 1 v. — A First Family of Tasajara 1 v. — Colonel Starbottle's Client, and some other People 1 v. — Susy 1 v. — Sally Dows, etc. 1 v. — A Protégée of Jack Hamlin's, etc. 1 v. — The Bell-Ringer of Angel's, etc. 1 v. — Clarence 1 v. — In a Hollow of the Hills, and The Devotion of Enriquez 1 v. — The Ancestors of Peter Atherly, etc. 1 v. — Three Partners 1 v. — Tales of Trail and Town 1 v. — Stories in Light and Shadow 1 v. — Mr. Jack Hamlin's Mediation, and other Stories 1 v. — From Sand-Hill to Pine 1 v. — Under the Redwoods 1 v.

Sir Henry Havelock, *vide* Rev. W. Brock.

Nathaniel Hawthorne (Am.), † 1864.

The Scarlet Letter 1 v. — Transformation (The Marble Faun) 2 v. — Passages from the English Note-Books of Nathaniel Hawthorne 2 v.

Mrs. Hector, *vide* Mrs. Alexander.

Author of "The Heir of Redclyffe," *vide* Charlotte M. Yonge.

Sir Arthur Helps, † 1875.

Friends in Council 2 v. — Ivan de Biron 2 v.

Mrs. Felicia Hemans, † 1835.

Select Poetical Works 1 v.

Maurice Hewlett.

The Forest Lovers 1 v. — Little Novels of Italy 1 v. — The Life and Death of Richard Yea-and-Nay 2 v.

Robert Hichens.

Flames 2 v. — The Slave 2 v.

Admiral Hobart Pasha, † 1886.
Sketches from my Life 1 v.

John Oliver Hobbes.
The Gods, Some Mortals and Lord Wickenham 1 v.

Mrs. Cashel Hoey.
A Golden Sorrow 2 v. — Out of Court 2 v.

Annie E. Holdsworth.
The Years that the Locust hath Eaten 1 v. — The Gods Arrive 1 v. — The Valley of the Great Shadow 1 v.

Holme Lee, *vide* Harriet Parr.

Oliver Wendell Holmes (Am.), † 1894.
The Autocrat of the Breakfast-Table 1 v. — The Professor at the Breakfast-Table 1 v. — The Poet at the Breakfast-Table 1 v. — Over the Teacups 1 v.

Anthony Hope (Hawkins).
Mr. Witt's Widow 1 v. — A Change of Air 1 v. — Half a Hero 1 v. — The Indiscretion of the Duchess 1 v. — The God in the Car 1 v. — The Chronicles of Count Antonio 1 v. — Comedies of Courtship 1 v. — The Heart of Princess Osra 1 v. — Phroso 2 v. — Simon Dale 2 v. — Rupert of Hentzau 1 v. — The King's Mirror 2 v. — Quisanté 1 v.

Tighe Hopkins.
An Idler in Old France 1 v. — The Man in the Iron Mask 1 v.

Author of "Horace Templeton."
Diary and Notes 1 v.

Ernest William Hornung.
A Bride from the Bush 1 v. — Under Two Skies 1 v. — Tiny Luttrell 1 v. — The Boss of Taroomba 1 v. — My Lord Duke 1 v. — Young Blood 1 v. — Some Persons Unknown 1 v. — The Amateur Cracksman 1 v. — The Rogue's March 1 v. — The Belle of Toorak 1 v. — Peccavi 1 v.

"Household Words."
Conducted by Charles Dickens. 1851-56. 36 v. — Novels and Tales reprinted from Household Words by Charles Dickens. 1856-59. 11 v.

***Mrs.* Houstoun, *vide* "Recommended to Mercy."**

Author of "How to be Happy though Married."
How to be Happy though Married 1 v.

Blanche Willis Howard (Am.), † 1899.
One Summer 1 v. — Aunt Serena 1 v. — Guenn 2 v. — Tony, the Maid, etc. 1 v. — The Open Door 2 v.

Blanche Willis Howard, † 1899, & William Sharp.
A Fellowe and His Wife 1 v.

William Dean Howells (Am.).
A Foregone Conclusion 1 v. — The Lady of the Aroostook 1 v. — A Modern Instance 2 v. — The Undiscovered Country 1 v. — Venetian Life (with Portrait) 1 v. — Italian Journeys 1 v. — A Chance Acquaintance 1 v. — Their Wedding Journey 1 v. — A Fearful Responsibility, and Tonelli's Marriage 1 v. — A Woman's Reason 2 v. — Dr. Breen's Practice 1 v. — The Rise of Silas Lapham 2 v.

Thomas Hughes, † 1898.
Tom Brown's School-Days 1 v.

Mrs. Hungerford (Mrs. Argles), † 1897.
Molly Bawn 2 v. — Mrs. Geoffrey 2 v. — Faith and Unfaith 2 v. — Portia 2 v. — Loÿs, Lord Berresford, and other Tales 1 v. — Her First Appearance, and other Tales 1 v. — Phyllis 2 v. — Rossmoyne 2 v. — Doris 2 v. — A Maiden all Forlorn, etc. 1 v. — A Passive Crime, and other Stories 1 v. — Green Pleasure and Grey Grief 2 v. — A Mental Struggle 2 v. — Her Week's Amusement, and Ugly Barrington 1 v. — Lady Branksmere 2 v. — Lady Valworth's Diamonds 1 v. — A Modern Circe 2 v. — Marvel 2 v. — The Hon. Mrs. Vereker 1 v. — Under-Currents 2 v. — In Durance Vile, etc. 1 v. — A Troublesome Girl, and other Stories 1 v. — A Life's Remorse 2 v. — A Born Coquette 2 v. — The Duchess 1 v. — Lady Verner's Flight 1 v. — A Conquering Heroine, and "When in Doubt" 1 v. — Nora Creina 2 v. — A Mad Prank, and other Stories 1 v. — The Hoyden 2 v. — The Red House Mystery 1 v. — An Unsatisfactory Lover 1 v. — Peter's Wife 2 v. — The Three Graces 1 v. — A Tug of War 1 v. — The Professor's Experiment 2 v. — A Point of Conscience 2 v. — A Lonely Girl 1 v. — Lovice 1 v. — The Coming of Chloe 1 v.

Mrs. Hunt, *vide* Averil Beaumont.

Violet Hunt.

The Human Interest 1 v.

Jean Ingelow, † 1897.

Off the Skelligs 3 v. — Poems 2 v. — Fated to be Free 2 v. — Sarah de Berenger 2 v. — Don John 2 v.

The Hon. Lady Inglis.

The Siege of Lucknow 1 v.

John H. Ingram, *vide* E. A. Poe.

Iota, *vide* Mrs. Mannington Caffyn.

Washington Irving (Am.), † 1859.

The Sketch Book (with Portrait) 1 v. — The Life of Mahomet 1 v. — Lives of the Successors of Mahomet 1 v. — Oliver Goldsmith 1 v. — Chronicles of Wolfert's Roost 1 v. — Life of George Washington 5 v.

Mrs. Helen Jackson (H. H.) (Am.), † 1885.

Ramona 2 v.

W. W. Jacobs.

Many Cargoes 1 v. — The Skipper's Wooing, and The Brown Man's Servant 1 v. — Sea Urchins 1 v. — A Master of Craft 1 v.

Charles T. C. James.

Holy Wedlock 1 v.

G. P. R. James, † 1860.

Morley Ernstein (with Portrait) 1 v. — Forest Days 1 v. — The False Heir 1 v. — Arabella Stuart 1 v. — Rose d'Albret 1 v. — Arrah Neil 1 v. — Agincourt 1 v. — The Smuggler 1 v. — The Step-Mother 2 v. — Beauchamp 1 v. — Heidelberg 1 v. — The Gipsy 1 v. — The Castle of Ehrenstein 1 v. — Darnley 1 v. — Russell 2 v. — The Convict 2 v. — Sir Theodore Broughton 2 v.

Henry James (Am.).

The American 2 v. — The Europeans 1 v. — Daisy Miller; An International Episode; Four Meetings 1 v. — Roderick Hudson 2 v. — The Madonna of the Future, etc. 1 v. — Eugene Pickering, etc. 1 v. — Confidence 1 v. — Washington Square, etc. 2 v. — The Portrait of a Lady 3 v. — Foreign Parts 1 v. — French Poets and Novelists 1 v. — The Siege of London; The Point of View; A Passionate Pilgrim 1 v. — Portraits of Places 1 v. — A Little Tour in France 1 v.

J. Cordy Jeaffreson.

A Book about Doctors 2 v. — A Woman in spite of Herself 2 v. — The Real Lord Byron 3 v.

Mrs. Charles Jenkin, † 1885.

"Who Breaks—Pays" 1 v. — Skirmishing 1 v. — Once and Again 2 v. — Two French Marriages 2 v. — Within an Ace 1 v. — Jupiter's Daughters 1 v.

Edward Jenkins.

Ginx's Baby, his Birth and other Misfortunes; Lord Bantam 2 v.

Author of "Jennie of 'The Prince's,'" *vide* B. H. Buxton.

Jerome K. Jerome.

The Idle Thoughts of an Idle Fellow 1 v. — Diary of a Pilgrimage, and Six Essays 1 v. — Novel Notes 1 v. — Sketches in Lavender, Blue and Green 1 v. — The Second Thoughts of an Idle Fellow 1 v. — Three Men on the Bummel 1 v.

Douglas Jerrold, † 1857.

History of St. Giles and St. James 2 v. — Men of Character 2 v.

Author of "John Halifax, Gentleman," *vide* Mrs. Craik.

Johnny Ludlow, *vide* Mrs. Henry Wood.

Samuel Johnson, † 1784.

Lives of the English Poets 2 v.

Emily Jolly.

Colonel Dacre 2 v.

Author of "Joshua Davidson," *vide* Mrs. E. Lynn Linton.

Miss Julia Kavanagh, † 1877.

Nathalie 2 v. — Daisy Burns 2 v. — Grace Lee 2 v. — Rachel Gray 1 v. — Adèle 3 v. — A Summer and Winter in the Two Sicilies 2 v. — Seven Years, and other Tales 2 v. — French Women of Letters 1 v. — English Women of Letters 1 v. — Queen Mab 2 v. — Beatrice 2 v. — Sybil's Second Love 2 v. — Dora 2 v. — Silvia 2 v. — Bessie 2 v. — John Dorrien 3 v. — Two Lilies 2 v. — Forget-me-nots 2 v. — *Vide* also Series for the Young, p. 29.

Annie Keary, † 1879.

Oldbury 2 v. — Castle Daly 2 v.

D'Esterre-Keeling, *vide* **Esterre.**

Thomas a Kempis.

The Imitation of Christ. Translated from the Latin by W. Benham, B.D. 1 v.

Richard B. Kimball (Am.), †

Saint Leger 1 v. — Romance of Student Life Abroad 1 v. — Undercurrents 1 v. — Was he Successful? 1 v. — To-Day in New York 1 v.

Alexander William Kinglake, † 1891.

Eothen 1 v. — The Invasion of the Crimea 14 v.

Charles Kingsley, † 1875.

Yeast 1 v. — Westward ho! 2 v. — Two Years ago 2 v. — Hypatia 2 v. — Alton Locke 1 v. — Hereward the Wake 2 v. — At Last 2 v. — His Letters and Memories of his Life, edited by his Wife 2 v.

Henry Kingsley, † 1876.

Ravenshoe 2 v. — Austin Elliot 1 v. — Geoffry Hamlyn 2 v. — The Hillyars and the Burtons 2 v. — Leighton Court 1 v. — Valentin 1 v. — Oakshott Castle 1 v. — Reginald Hetherege 2 v. — The Grange Garden 2 v.

Albert Kinross.

An Opera and Lady Grasmere 1 v.

Rudyard Kipling.

Plain Tales from the Hills 1 v. — The Second Jungle Book 1 v. — The Seven Seas 1 v. — "Captains Courageous" 1 v. — The Day's Work 1 v. — A Fleet in Being 1 v. — Stalky & Co. 1 v. — From Sea to Sea 2 v. — The City of Dreadful Night 1 v.

May Laffan.

Flitters, Tatters, and the Counsellor, etc. 1 v.

Charles Lamb, † 1834.

The Essays of Elia and Eliana 1 v.

Mary Langdon (Am.).

Ida May 1 v.

Author of "The Last of the Cavaliers" (Miss Piddington).

The Last of the Cavaliers 2 v. — The Gain of a Loss 2 v.

Mme de Laszowska, *vide* **E. Gerard.**

The Hon. Emily Lawless.

Hurrish 1 v.

George Alfred Laurence, *vide* **Author of "Guy Livingstone."**

"Leaves from the Journal of our Life in the Highlands," *vide* **Victoria R. I.**

Holme Lee, † 1900, *vide* **Harriet Parr.**

J. S. Le Fanu, † 1873.

Uncle Silas 2 v. — Guy Deverell 2 v.

Mark Lemon, † 1870.

Wait for the End 2 v. — Loved at Last 2 v. — Falkner Lyle 2 v. — Leyton Hall, and other Tales 2 v. — Golden Fetters 2 v.

Charles Lever, † 1872.

The O'Donoghue 1 v. — The Knight of Gwynne 3 v. — Arthur O'Leary 2 v. — Harry Lorrequer 2 v. — Charles O'Malley 3 v. — Tom Burke of "Ours" 3 v. — Jack Hinton 2 v. — The Daltons 4 v. — The Dodd Family Abroad 3 v. — The Martins of Cro' Martin 3 v. — The Fortunes of Glencore 2 v. — Roland Cashel 3 v. — Davenport Dunn 3 v. — Confessions of Con Cregan 2 v. — One of Them 2 v. — Maurice Tiernay 2 v. — Sir Jasper Carew 2 v. — Barrington 2 v. — A Day's Ride 2 v. — Luttrell of Arran 2 v. — Tony Butler 2 v. — Sir Brook Fossbrooke 2 v. — The Bramleighs of Bishop's Folly 2 v. — A Rent in a Cloud 1 v. — That Boy of Norcott's 1 v. — St. Patrick's Eve; Paul Gosslett's Confessions 1 v. — Lord Kilgobbin 2 v.

S. Levett-Yeats.

The Honour of Savelli 1 v. — The Chevalier d'Auriac 1 v.

G. H. Lewes, † 1878.

Ranthorpe 1 v. — The Physiology of Common Life 2 v. — On Actors and the Art of Acting 1 v.

Mrs. E. Lynn Linton, † 1898.

The true History of Joshua Davidson 1 v. — Patricia Kemball 2 v. — The Atonement of Leam Dundas 2 v. — The World well Lost 2 v. — Under which Lord? 2 v. — With a Silken Thread, and other Stories 1 v. — Todhunters' at Loan-in' Head, and other Stories 1 v. — "My Love!" 2 v. — The Girl of the Period, and other Social Essays 1 v. — Ione 2 v.

Laurence W. M. Lockhart, † 1882.
Mine is Thine 2 v.

Lord Augustus Loftus.
Diplomatic Reminiscences 1837-1862 (with Portrait) 2 v.

Mme de Longard, *vide* D. Gerard.

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow (Am.), † 1882.
Poetical Works (with Portrait) 3 v. — The Divine Comedy of Dante Alighieri 3 v. — The New-England Tragedies 1 v. — The Divine Tragedy 1 v. — Flower-de-Luce, and Three Books of Song 1 v. — The Masque of Pandora, and other Poems 1 v.

Margaret Lonsdale.
Sister Dora (with a Portrait of Sister Dora) 1 v.

Author of "A Lost Battle."
A Lost Battle 2 v.

Sir John Lubbock, Bart.
The Pleasures of Life 1 v. — The Beauties of Nature (with Illustrations) 1 v. — The Use of Life 1 v. — Scenery of Switzerland (with Illustrations) 2 v.

"Lutfullah," *vide* Eastwick.

Edna Lyall.
We Two 2 v. — Donovan 2 v. — In the Golden Days 2 v. — Knight-Errant 2 v. — Won by Waiting 2 v. — Wayfaring Men 2 v. — Hope the Hermit 2 v. — Doreen 2 v.

Lord Lytton, *vide* E. Bulwer.

Robert Lord Lytton (Owen Meredith), † 1891.
Poems 2 v. — Fables in Song 2 v.

Maarten Maartens.
The Sin of Joost Avelingh 1 v. — An Old Maid's Love 2 v. — God's Fool 2 v. — The Greater Glory 2 v. — My Lady Nobody 2 v. — Her Memory 1 v.

Thomas Babington, Lord Macaulay, † 1859.
History of England (with Portrait) 10 v. — Critical and Historical Essays 5 v. — Lays of Ancient Rome 1 v. — Speeches 2 v. — Biographical Essays 1 v. — William Pitt, Atterbury 1 v. — (See also *Trevelyan*).

Justin McCarthy.
The Waterdale Neighbours 2 v. — Dear Lady Disdain 2 v. — Miss Misanthrope 2 v. — A History of our own Times 5 v. — Donna Quixote 2 v. — A short History of our own Times 2 v. — A History of the Four Georges vols. 1 & 2. — A History of our own Times vols. 6 & 7 (supplemental). — A History of the Four Georges and of William IV. Vols. 3, 4 & 5 (supplemental).

George Mac Donald.
Alec Forbes of Howglen 2 v. — Annals of a Quiet Neighbourhood 2 v. — David Elginbrod 2 v. — The Vicar's Daughter 2 v. — Malcolm 2 v. — St. George and St. Michael 2 v. — The Marquis of Lossie 2 v. — Sir Gibbie 2 v. — Mary Marston 2 v. — The Gifts of the Child Christ, and other Tales 1 v. — The Princess and Curdie 1 v.

Mrs. Mackarness, † 1881.
Sunbeam Stories 1 v. — A Peerless Wife 2 v. — A Mingled Yarn 2 v.

Eric Mackay, † 1898.
Love Letters of a Violinist, and other Poems 1 v.

Charles McKnight (Am.).
Old Fort Duquesne 2 v.

Ian Maclaren.
Beside the Bonnie Brier Bush 1 v. — The Days of Auld Langsyne 1 v.

Norman Macleod, † 1872.
The Old Lieutenant and his Son 1 v.

James Macpherson, † 1696, *vide* Ossian.

Mrs. Macquoid.
Patty 2 v. — Miriam's Marriage 2 v. — Pictures across the Channel 2 v. — Too Soon 1 v. — My Story 2 v. — Diane 2 v. — Beside the River 2 v. — A Faithful Lover 2 v.

Author of "Mademoiselle Mori" (Miss Roberts).
Mademoiselle Mori 2 v. — Denise 1 v. — Madame Fontenoy 1 v. — On the Edge of the Storm 1 v. — The Atelier du Lys 2 v. — In the Olden Time 2 v.

Lord Mahon, *vide* Stanhope.

E. S. Maine.
Scarcliff Rocks 2 v.

Lucas Malet.

Colonel Enderby's Wife 2 v.

The Earl of Malmesbury, G.C.B.

Memoirs of an Ex-Minister 3 v.

Mary E. Mann.

A Winter's Tale 1 v. — The Cedar Star 1 v.

Robert Blachford Mansfield.

The Log of the Water Lily 1 v.

Mark Twain, *vide* Twain.

Author of "Marmorne," *vide* P. G. Hamerton.

Capt. Marryat, † 1848.

Jacob Faithful (with Portrait) 1 v. — Percival Keene 1 v. — Peter Simple 1 v. — Japhet in Search of a Father 1 v. — Monsieur Violet 1 v. — The Settlers in Canada 1 v. — The Mission 1 v. — The Privateer's-Man 1 v. — The Children of the New-Forest 1 v. — Valerie 1 v. — Mr. Midshipman Easy 1 v. — The King's Own 1 v.

Florence Marryat, † 1899.

Love's Conflict 2 v. — For Ever and Ever 2 v. — The Confessions of Gerald Estcourt 2 v. — Nelly Brooke 2 v. — Véronique 2 v. — Petronel 2 v. — Her Lord and Master 2 v. — The Prey of the Gods 1 v. — Life and Letters of Captain Marryat 1 v. — Mad Dumaresq 2 v. — No Intentions 2 v. — Fighting the Air 2 v. — A Star and a Heart; An Utter Impossibility 1 v. — The Poison of Asps, and other Stories 1 v. — A Lucky Disappointment, and other Stories 1 v. — "My own Child" 2 v. — Her Father's Name 2 v. — A Harvest of Wild Oats 2 v. — A Little Stepson 1 v. — Written in Fire 2 v. — Her World against a Lie 2 v. — A Broken Blossom 2 v. — The Root of all Evil 2 v. — The Fair-haired Alda 2 v. — With Cupid's Eyes 2 v. — My Sister the Actress 2 v. — Phyllida 2 v. — How they loved Him 2 v. — Facing the Footlights (with Portrait) 2 v. — A Moment of Madness, and other Stories 1 v. — The Ghost of Charlotte Cray, and other Stories 1 v. — Peeress and Player 2 v. — Under the Lilies and Roses 2 v. — The Heart *of Jane Warner* 2 v. — The Heir Presumptive 2 v. — The Master Passion 2 v. — *Spiders of Society* 2 v. — Driven to Bay 2 v. — *A Daughter of the Tropics* 2 v. — Gentleman and Courtier 2 v. — On Circumstantial Evidence 2 v. — Mount Eden. A Romance 2 v. — Blindfold 2 v. — A Scarlet Sin 1 v. — A Bankrupt Heart 2 v. — The Spirit World 1 v. — The Beautiful Soul 1 v. — At Heart a Rake 2 v. — The Strange Transfiguration of Hannah Stubbs 1 v. — The Dream that Stayed 2 v. — A Passing Madness 1 v. — The Blood of the Vampire 1 v. — A Soul on Fire 1 v. — Iris the Avenger 1 v.

Mrs. Anne Marsh (Caldwell), † 1874.

Ravenscliffe 2 v. — Emilia Wyndham 2 v. — Castle Avon 2 v. — Aubrey 2 v. — The Heiress of Haughton 2 v. — Evelyn Marston 2 v. — The Rose of Ashurst 2 v.

Mrs. Emma Marshall, † 1899.

Mrs. Mainwaring's Journal 1 v. — Benvenuta 1 v. — Lady Alice 1 v. — Dayspring 1 v. — Life's Aftermath 1 v. — In the East Country 1 v. — No. XIII; or, The Story of the Lost Vestal 1 v. — In Four Reigns 1 v. — On the Banks of the Ouse 1 v. — In the City of Flowers 1 v. — Alma 1 v. — Under Salisbury Spire 1 v. — The End Crowns All 1 v. — Winchester Meads 1 v. — Eventide Light 1 v. — Winifrede's Journal 1 v. — Bristol Bells 1 v. — In the Service of Rachel Lady Russell 1 v. — A Lily among Thorns 1 v. — Penshurst Castle 1 v. — Kensington Palace 1 v. — The White King's Daughter 1 v. — The Master of the Musicians 1 v. — An Escape from the Tower 1 v. — A Haunt of Ancient Peace 1 v. — Castle Meadow 1 v. — In the Choir of Westminster Abbey 1 v. — The Young Queen of Hearts 1 v. — Under the Dome of St. Paul's 1 v. — The Parson's Daughter 1 v.

Helen Mathers (Mrs. Henry Reeves).

"Cherry Ripe!" 2 v. — "Land o' the Leal" 1 v. — My Lady Green Sleeves 2 v. — As he comes up the Stair, etc. 1 v. — Sam's Sweetheart 2 v. — Eyre's Acquittal 2 v. — Found Out 1 v. — Murder or Manslaughter? 1 v. — The Fashion of this World (80 Pf.) — Blind Justice, and "Who, being dead, yet Speaketh" 1 v. — What the Glass Told, and A Study of a Woman 1 v. — Bam Wildfire 2 v. — Becky 2 v.

Colonel Maurice.

The Balance of Military Power in Europe 1 v.

George du Maurier, † 1896.
Trilby 2 v. — The Martian 2 v.

Mrs. Maxwell, *vide* Miss Braddon.

Author of "Mehalah," *vide* Baring-Gould.

George J. Whyte Melville, † 1878.
Kate Coventry 1 v. — Holmby House 2 v. — Digby Grand 1 v. — Good for Nothing 2 v. — The Queen's Maries 2 v. — The Gladiators 2 v. — The Brookes of Bridlemere 2 v. — Cerise 2 v. — The Interpreter 2 v. — The White Rose 2 v. — M. or N. 1 v. — Contraband 1 v. — Sarchedon 2 v. — Uncle John 2 v. — Katerfelto 1 v. — Sister Louise 1 v. — Rosine 1 v. — Roys' Wife 2 v. — Black but Comely 2 v. — Riding Recollections 1 v.

Memorial Volumes, *vide* Five Centuries (vol. 500); The New Testament (vol. 1000); Henry Morley (vol. 2000).

George Meredith.
The Ordeal of Richard Feverel 2 v. — Beauchamp's Career 2 v. — The Tragic Comedians 1 v. — Lord Ormont and his Aminta 2 v. — The Amazing Marriage 2 v.

Owen Meredith, *vide* Robert Lord Lytton.

Leonard Merrick.
The Man who was good 1 v. — This Stage of Fools 1 v. — Cynthia 1 v. — One Man's View 1 v. — The Actor-Manager 1 v. — The Worldlings 1 v.

Henry Seton Merriman.
Young Mistley 1 v. — Prisoners and Captives 2 v. — From One Generation to Another 1 v. — With Edged Tools 2 v. — The Sowers 2 v. — Flotsam 1 v. — In Kedar's Tents 1 v. — Roden's Corner 1 v. — The Isle of Unrest 1 v.

H. S. Merriman & S. G. Tallentyre.
The Money-Spinner, etc. 1 v.

John Milton, † 1674.
Poetical Works 1 v.

Author of "Miss Molly."
Geraldine Hawthorne 1 v.

Author of "Molly Bawn," *vide* Mrs. Hungerford.

Florence Montgomery.
Misunderstood 1 v. — Thrown Together 2 v. — Thwarted 1 v. — Wild Mike 1 v. — Seaforth 2 v. — The Blue Veil 1 v. — Transformed 1 v. — The Fisherman's Daughter, etc. 1 v. — Colonel Norton 2 v. — Prejudged 1 v.

Frank Frankfort Moore.
"I Forbid the Banns" 2 v. — A Gray Eye or So 2 v. — One Fair Daughter 2 v. — They Call it Love 2 v. — The Jessamy Bride 1 v. — The Millionaires 1 v. — Nell Gwynn—Comedian 1 v.

George Moore.
Celibates 1 v. — Evelyn Innes 2 v.

Thomas Moore, † 1852.
Poetical Works (with Portrait) 5 v.

Lady Morgan, † 1859.
Memoirs 3 v.

Henry Morley, † 1894.
Of English Literature in the Reign of Victoria. With Facsimiles of the Signatures of Authors in the Tauchnitz Edition (v. 2000, published 1881) 1 v.

William Morris.
A Selection from his Poems. Edited with a Memoir by F. Hueffer 1 v.

Arthur Morrison.
Tales of Mean Streets 1 v. — A Child of the Jago 1 v. — To London Town 1 v. — Cunning Murrell 1 v.

James Fullarton Muirhead.
The Land of Contrasts 1 v.

Miss Mulock, *vide* Mrs. Craik.

David Christie Murray.
Rainbow Gold 2 v.

Grenville: Murray, *vide* Grenville.

Author of "My Little Lady," *vide* E. Frances Poynter.

The New Testament.
The Authorised English Version, with Introduction and Various Readings from the three most celebrated Manuscripts of the Original Text, by Constantine Tischendorf (vol. 1000, published 1869) 1 v.

Mrs. C. J. Newby.
Common Sense 2 v.

Dr. J. H. Newman (Cardinal Newman), † 1890.

Callista 1 v.

Mrs. Nicholls, *vide* **Currer Bell.**

Author of "Nina Balatka," *vide* **Anthony Trollope.**

Author of "No Church" (F. Robinson).

No Church 2 v. — Owen:—a Waif 2 v.

Lady Augusta Noel.

From Generation to Generation 1 v. — Hithersea Mere 2 v.

W. E. Norris.

My Friend Jim 1 v. — A Bachelor's Blunder 2 v. — Major and Minor 2 v. — The Rogue 2 v. — Miss Shafto 2 v. — Mrs. Fenton 1 v. — Misadventure 2 v. — Saint Ann's 1 v. — A Victim of Good Luck 1 v. — The Dancer in Yellow 1 v. — Clarissa Furiosa 2 v. — Marietta's Marriage 2 v. — The Fight for the Crown 1 v. — The Widower 1 v. — Giles Ingilby 1 v. — The Flower of the Flock 1 v. — His Own Father 1 v.

Hon. Mrs. Norton, † 1877.

Stuart of Dunleath 2 v. — Lost and Saved 2 v. — Old Sir Douglas 2 v.

Author of "Not Easily Jealous" (Miss Iza Hardy).

Not Easily Jealous 2 v.

"Novels and Tales," *vide* **"Household Words."**

Charlotte O'Conor-Eccles, *vide* **Hal Godfrey.**

Laurence Oliphant, † 1888.

Altiora Peto 2 v. — Masollam 2 v.

Mrs. Oliphant, † 1897.

The Last of the Mortimers 2 v. — Mrs. Margaret Maitland 1 v. — Agnes 2 v. — Madonna Mary 2 v. — The Minister's Wife 2 v. — The Rector and the Doctor's Family 1 v. — Salem Chapel 2 v. — The Perpetual Curate 2 v. — Miss Marjoribanks 2 v. — Ombra 2 v. — Memoir of Count de Montalembert 2 v. — May 2 v. — Innocent 2 v. — For Love and Life 2 v. — A Rose in June 1 v. — The Story of Valentine and his Brother 2 v. — Whiteladies 2 v. — The Curate in Charge 1 v. — Phœbe, Junior 2 v. — Mrs. Arthu Carità 2 v. — Young Musgrave The Primrose Path 2 v. — Wit Precincts 3 v. — The Greatest He England 2 v. — He that will not w may 2 v. — Harry Joscelyn 2 v Trust 2 v. — It was a Lover and 3 v. — The Ladies Lindores 3 v. — 3 v. — The Wizard's Son 3 v Country Gentleman and his Famil Neighbours on the Green 1 v. — The Daughter 1 v. — The Fugitives Kirsteen 2 v. — Life of Laurence C and of Alice Oliphant, his Wife 2 v Little Pilgrim in the Unseen 1 v. Heir Presumptive and the Heir A 2 v. — The Sorceress 2 v. — Sir F Fortune 2 v. — The Ways of Life Old Mr. Tredgold 2 v.

"One who has kept a I *vide* **George W. E. Rus**

Ossian.

The Poems of Ossian. Transl James Macpherson 1 v.

Ouida.

Idalia 2 v. — Tricotrin 2 v. — Puc Chandos 2 v. — Strathmore 2 v. — two Flags 2 v. — Folle-Farine 2 Leaf in the Storm; A Dog of F A Branch of Lilac; A Proven 1 v. — Cecil Castlemaine's Gage, a Novelettes 1 v. — Madame la M and other Novelettes 1 v. — Pasc — Held in Bondage 2 v. — T Wooden Shoes 1 v. — Signa (with 3 v. — In a Winter City 1 v. — Ariad Friendship 2 v. — Moths 3 v. — Pi and other Stories 1 v. — A Villa mune 2 v. — In Maremma 3 v. 1 v. — Wanda 3 v. — Frescoes a Stories 1 v. — Princess Napraxin Othmar 3 v. — A Rainy June (60 P Gesualdo (60 Pf.). — A House Pa Guilderoy 2 v. — Syrlin 3 v. — Ru other Stories 1 v. — Santa Barb 1 v. — Two Offenders 1 v. — T Christ, etc. 1 v. — Toxin, and oth 1 v. — Le Selve, and Tonia 1 Massarenes 2 v. — An Altruist, Essays 1 v. — La Strega, a Stories 1 v. — The Waters of E — Street Dust, and Other Stori Critical Studies 1 v.

Author of "The Outcasts "Roy Tellet."

Gilbert Parker.

The Battle of the Strong 2 v

Harriet Parr (Holme Lee), † 1900.

Basil Godfrey's Caprice 2 v. — For Richer, for Poorer 2 v. — The Beautiful Miss Barrington 2 v. — Her Title of Honour 1 v. — Echoes of a Famous Year 1 v. — Katherine's Trial 1 v. — The Vicissitudes of Bessie Fairfax 2 v. — Ben Milner's Wooing 1 v. — Straightforward 2 v. — Mrs. Denys of Cote 2 v. — A Poor Squire 1 v.

Mrs. Parr.

Dorothy Fox 1 v. — The Prescotts of Pamphillon 2 v. — The Gosau Smithy, etc. 1 v. — Robin 2 v. — Loyalty George 2 v.

George Paston.

A Study in Prejudices 1 v. — A Fair Deceiver 1 v.

Mrs. Paul, *vide* Author of "Still Waters."

Author of "Paul Ferroll" (Mrs. Caroline Clive).

Paul Ferroll 1 v. — Year after Year 1 v. — Why Paul Ferroll killed his Wife 1 v.

James Payn, † 1898.

Found Dead 1 v. — Gwendoline's Harvest 1 v. — Like Father, like Son 2 v. — Not Wooed, but Won 2 v. — Cecil's Tryst 1 v. — A Woman's Vengeance 2 v. — Murphy's Master 1 v. — In the Heart of a Hill, and other Stories 1 v. — At Her Mercy 2 v. — The Best of Husbands 2 v. — Walter's Word 2 v. — Halves 2 v. — Fallen Fortunes 2 v. — What He cost Her 2 v. — By Proxy 2 v. — Less Black than we're Painted 2 v. — Under one Roof 2 v. — High Spirits 1 v. — High Spirits *(Second Series)* 1 v. — A Confidential Agent 2 v. — From Exile 2 v. — A Grape from a Thorn 2 v. — Some Private Views 1 v. — For Cash Only 2 v. — Kit: A Memory 2 v. — The Canon's Ward (with Portrait) 2 v. — Some Literary Recollections 1 v. — The Talk of the Town 1 v. — The Luck of the Darrells 2 v. — The Heir of the Ages 2 v. — Holiday Tasks 1 v. — Glow-Worm Tales *(First Series)* 1 v. — Glow-Worm Tales *(Second Series)* 1 v. — A Prince of the Blood 2 v. — The Mystery of Mirbridge 2 v. — The Burnt Million 2 v. — The Word and the Will 2 v. — Sunny Stories, and some Shady Ones 1 v. — A Modern Dick Whittington 2 v. — A Stumble on the Threshold 2 v. — A Trying Patient 1 v. — Gleams of Memory, and The Eavesdropper 1 v. — In Market Overt 1 v. — The Disappearance of George Driffell, and other Tales 1 v. — Another's Burden etc. 1 v. — The Backwater of Life, or Essays of a Literary Veteran 1 v.

Frances Mary Peard.

One Year 2 v. — The Rose-Garden 1 v. — Unawares 1 v. — Thorpe Regis 1 v. — A Winter Story 1 v. — A Madrigal, and other Stories 1 v. — Cartouche 1 v. — Mother Molly 1 v. — Schloss and Town 2 v. — Contradictions 2 v. — Near Neighbours 1 v. — Alicia Tennant 1 v. — Madame's Granddaughter 1 v. — Donna Teresa 1 v. — Number One and Number Two 1 v.

Max Pemberton.

The Impregnable City 1 v. — A Woman of Kronstadt 1 v. — The Phantom Army 1 v. — The Garden of Swords 1 v. — The Footsteps of a Throne 1 v. — Pro Patriâ 1 v.

Bishop Thomas Percy, † 1811.

Reliques of Ancient English Poetry 3 v.

F. C. Philips.

As in a Looking Glass 1 v. — The Dean and his Daughter 1 v. — Lucy Smith 1 v. — A Lucky Young Woman 1 v. — Jack and Three Jills 1 v. — Little Mrs. Murray 1 v. — Young Mr. Ainslie's Courtship 1 v. — Social Vicissitudes 1 v. — Extenuating Circumstances, and A French Marriage 1 v. — More Social Vicissitudes 1 v. — Constance 2 v. — That Wicked Mad'moiselle, etc. 1 v. — A Doctor in Difficulties, etc. 1 v. — Black and White 1 v. — "One Never Knows" 2 v. — Of Course 1 v. — Miss Ormerod's Protégé 1 v. — My little Husband 1 v. — Mrs. Bouverie 1 v. — A Question of Colour, and other Stories 1 v. — A Devil in Nun's Veiling 1 v. — A Full Confession, and other Stories 1 v. — The Luckiest of Three 1 v. — Poor Little Bella 1 v. — Eliza Clarke, Governess, and Other Stories 1 v.

F. C. Philips & Percy Fendall.

A Daughter's Sacrifice 1 v. — Margaret Byng 1 v.

F. C. Philips & C. J. Wills.

The Fatal Phryne 1 v. — The Scudamores 1 v. — A Maiden Fair to See 1 v. — Sybil Ross's Marriage 1 v.

Eden Phillpotts.

Lying Prophets 2 v. — The Human Boy 1 v. — Sons of the Morning 2 v.

Miss Piddington, *vide* Author of "The Last of the Cavaliers."

Edgar Allan Poe (Am.), † 1849.
Poems and Essays, edited with a new Memoir by John H. Ingram 1 v. — Tales, edited by John H. Ingram 1 v.

Alexander Pope, † 1744.
Select Poetical Works (with Portrait) 1 v.

Miss E. Frances Poynter.
My Little Lady 2 v. — Ersilia 2 v. — Among the Hills 1 v. — Madame de Presnel 1 v.

Mrs. Campbell Praed.
Zéro 1 v. — Affinities 1 v. — The Head Station 2 v.

Mrs. E. Prentiss (Am.), † 1878.
Stepping Heavenward 1 v.

The Prince Consort, † 1861.
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Hor. N. Pym, *vide* **Caroline Fox.**

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H. M. the Queen, *vide* **Victoria R. I.**

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C. E. Raimond (Miss Robins).
The Open Question 2 v.

Author of "The Rajah's Heir."
The Rajah's Heir 2 v.

Charles Reade, † 1884.
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Author of "Recommended to Mercy" (Mrs. Houstoun).
"Recommended to Mercy" 2 v. — *Zoe's "Brand"* 2 v.

Mrs. Reeves, *vide* **Helen Mathers.**

Grace Rhys.
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James Rice, *vide* **Walter Besant.**

Alfred Bate Richards, † 1876.
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S. Richardson, † 1761.
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Poems 1 v. — Ballads and Sonnets 1 v.

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Prof. J. R. Seeley, M.A., † 1895.
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